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CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY

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BY

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'FIRST LESSONS IN PHILOSOPHY,' 'PERMANENT ELEMENTS IN
CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY,' 'HIGHWAYS IN BOOKLAND,'
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TO THE
TWO FAITHFUL STEWARDS IN
THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH AT
LADY MARGARET ROAD

DAVID BRAKE

AND

BENNET OPIE

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK
IN MEMORY OF THEIR LOYALTY

PREFACE

THIS book is a sequel to my *First Lessons in Philosophy*.

Like that book, it is not intended for the professional student of philosophy. I have in view the average person who takes an interest in philosophical literature, for whom some practical guidance is necessary on account of lack of technical training.

I have long held the opinion that the number of people interested in philosophic thought is on the increase, and the reception of *First Lessons* has confirmed this view.

I am sensible of the heaviness of the task I have undertaken, and of my own limitations; and am specially anxious to avoid all appearance of pretentiousness. I make no claim to any special fitness as an interpreter of philosophy, but experience has brought me some immediate acquaintance with the needs of the type of mind for whom I write; and my hope is that this book will be regarded as a sincere and modest attempt to meet those needs.

I have to thank the Rev. John Telford, B.A., and the Rev. J. Alfred Sharp for kindly encouragement, and for permission to use the matter contained in some short articles which have appeared in *The Preacher's Magazine*; and also my friends Charles J. Nichols and H. Painter for help in reading MSS. and proof-sheets.

R. J. W.

LADY MARGARET ROAD, N.W.

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PART I
INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER I

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

§ 1. IMPORTANCE OF PHILOSOPHY

THE popular prejudice against philosophy is not so universal as in past times, but many people still are not at all sure that it is a good thing. They are always ready with the question, 'What is the good of it?' All men understand the use of 'science,' because they see its discoveries, inventions, and appliances for the amelioration of suffering, and for the increase of comfort and welfare. All men can appreciate the value of 'exploration,' because it opens up new countries for the extension of civilization and the growth of commerce. Most men see the utility of 'economics,' because that department of study has to do with governments, banks, business, and social movements. But probably the majority think of 'philosophy' as little more than a pastime for academic pundits, who spend their time refuting each other's opinions. An increasing number, however, are slowly coming to realize the truth that 'philosophy has been the soul of the

world's great movements in history, in politics, in art, in religion; wherever an affair of human interest has gone deep enough to give colour to a nation's development, hindrance to human wrongs, or vigour to the highest aspiration of a people—there, therein, has been philosophy.’¹

§ 2. THE NEW INTEREST IN PHILOSOPHY

Since the dawn of the twentieth century there has come a new spring-tide of interest in the subject, and a conviction has emerged which has both negative and positive aspects. *Negatively*, it indicates that the conclusions of natural science have no claim to be called true which can be accepted without serious criticism. *Positively*, it suggests that there is something of vast importance which we cannot learn in any other way than by thinking about the common background of reality lying behind and beyond all the conclusions of natural science. This conviction owes its origin to the fact that during the latter half of the nineteenth century thinkers were almost universally dominated by the belief that, look where they would in the realm of nature, there was always something new to be discovered. The passion for discovery mastered their minds. The one aim of the majority of scholars was to observe, describe, and classify things and events. They found that the realm of nature contained a bound-

¹ Baldwin, *Fragments in Philosophy and Science*, p. 4.

less variety of things, qualities, and relations, and specially trained men spent their lives observing, describing, and classifying the things and processes in one small section of the whole. Even yet, by no means have all the things and processes in nature been observed, described, and arranged. On the contrary, the more rapid the progress in the work, the more clearly does nature's wealth of variety appear to be infinite; but such enormous masses of facts and processes have been examined and arranged already that the largest library alone could contain the resulting data, and it has come to be recognized that the necessity for unifying present knowledge, and for working over the material already on hand from general points of view, is imperative. The synthetic factors of the human mind are vigorously asserting themselves, and finding expression in the writings of many men whose works will be referred to in the course of this book—men who give us new images of the world, and point the way to progressive modifications in that philosophic thought which is the common ground of religion, science, art, government, industry, and every other form of human activity.

§ 3. THE NEW STYLE IN PHILOSOPHY

These modern writers have learned the art of putting their thoughts into straightforward and interesting speech. Many of the great thinkers

of the past seem to have been incapable of writing in plain language, and in such a way as to excite the attention of the reader. The cumbrous elaboration of their thoughts often leaves a desolate impression on the mind. But modern philosophers nearly always make hard things easy to follow. Every man in the front rank writes lucidly and vividly, and some of them have 'a flexibility of verbal resource that follows the thought without crease or wrinkle, as elastic silk underclothing follows the movement of the body.'¹

§ 4. THE NEW AIM IN PHILOSOPHY

It used to be the aim of every system of philosophy to be 'a picture of the great universe of God.' A traditional belief persisted through many centuries that no philosophy was true which did not explain the infinite and the eternal. Speculation was carried to an extravagant degree, and in the language of Clifford 'the word philosopher meant, too often, the man who thought it his business to explain everything in a certain number of large books.' It is very different with contemporary philosophers. Their intention may be described in three aspects :—

- (a) They seek a deeper truth in things and events than that which is the object of science. Science seeks to learn all that is to be known

¹ PROFESSOR W. JAMES on Bergson, *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. VII, No. 3, p. 563.

about a thing or about the world, and to tell us what is known; but philosophy seeks to understand what has been learned, and to help us to understand it, and there is vast difference between merely knowing anything and really understanding it, between learning it and really seeing it with the eyes of the mind.

(b) They endeavour to link up the various branches of knowledge so that they become regular parts of one organization. The various special sciences may be compared to separate telephones in separate houses, and philosophy to the central office through which any man who has a telephone in his residence may be connected up with anybody else, provided he so desires. This is one of *Professor Ostwald's* illustrations, and he also compares the natural sciences to a confusion of streets in some large city, and likens philosophy to a general plan of the city—suggesting, at the same time, that when studying science, a man had better have some knowledge of the general plan, which is philosophy, if for no other reason than to keep him from losing his way.¹

(c) They aim at bringing the human mind face to face with the great realities of life and being. The world-problems such as:—whence the world is, whither it is tending, why it exists; the nature and guarantee of truth;

¹ See Ostwald's *Natural Philosophy*, p. 10.

the essence of Self, and the Being of God, are its subjects. Contemporary philosophy does not pretend to solve these problems for us, but it enables us to realize them more fully; it makes them more vivid and intimate, and shows us their bearing on life; it teaches us how to think about them, and think through them.

§ 5. THE NEW CHARACTERISTICS OF PHILOSOPHY

The four chief characteristics of Modern Philosophy are as follows:—

(a) *Scientific.* The control of natural science during the latter half of the nineteenth century has made it inevitable that philosophy should show a more decided tendency to approach science than it has done in the past. But the nature of this approach must be understood. It is not meant that the line of approach is towards the same ends as science, or that philosophy will ever encroach on the domain of science. In the nature of things philosophy is purely theoretical and must ever remain so. It always seeks for a theory of reality rather than for matters of fact. Science treats of things and events from the point of view of their make-up and their uses in the economy of the world; Philosophy

treats of them from the point of view of their significance for a human soul, which sees them as parts of one whole. Neither is it meant that the line of approach is towards the method of science. The method of science is essentially empirical, and must always remain so; it proceeds by observation and by experiment, and its very hypotheses are mere starting-points for further observation and experiment. The method of philosophy is essentially speculative and must always remain so; it proceeds by *meditation on principles* which are independent of facts and events.

The tendency of philosophy to approach science means essentially that philosophers are endeavouring to work hand in hand with scientists. They are ridding themselves of individual prejudice and misconception. They are abandoning all foolish and impossible attempts to explain the infinite and the eternal. They are restraining their speculations within the bounds of established fact, and consenting to use the mental instruments provided by science, which are spoken of as 'laws,' such as the 'law of energy' and the 'law of evolution.'

(b) *Evolutionary.* The idea of evolution has begun not merely to mould philosophy but to live and move in it. Contemporary thought is drifting away from all static conceptions of the world in the direction of

conceptions which are dynamic, and an ascending effort is being made to elucidate the mystery of the universe by treating it as a 'continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances.' Until a short time ago philosophers contemplated all objects of thought, from 'atoms' on the one hand to 'forms of thought' on the other, as if they were finished products. The 'atoms' were *not* thought of as if they were stationary or incapable of combination, but they were thought of as if they could be weighed, measured, and counted. 'Time' was thought of as if it were a long line that could be cut up into an infinite series of dots or units. 'Forms of thought' were regarded as fixities, meaning 'that and no other,' and 'Experience' was conceived as if it were a patchwork of events in the inner life of man.

This method of thinking guided human thought to many of its proudest triumphs; but it is a method which has been seriously challenged in recent years. Most contemporary philosophers look at everything as essentially '*movement, spirit, life.*' They think of reality, not as static and unchanging, but as a continuous development of life, which is never precisely the same as it was a moment before, but is always 'becoming,' and is always moving in one direction.

(c) *Psychological*. It is said that the *dominant* tendency of twentieth-century philosophy is to 'psychologize life.' By this is meant that the activity of life cannot be explained from mechanical and chemical points of view; but that all the elaborate changes which take place in living things, all the inexhaustible variety in the world, all the countless transformations in matter and form of which the world is so full, are produced by a *psychic element in life*, which moulds matter and force to its own uses. Another name for this psychic element is 'mind'—not man's mind, nor like to man's mind, but eternal and universal mind, of which man's mind is in some measure, and in one aspect, a condensation. So much stress is being laid on this psychological point of view that even naturalists are being compelled to become something of psychologists.¹

(d) *Personalistic*. 'Personality' has a prominence in current philosophy that it has never had in past times. Some philosophers speak of it as a centre of thought in which energy is received and transformed, and out of which original energy is discharged. Some think of it as a centre of experience which possesses memory, and they describe 'memory' as a

¹ See *Evolution*, by Professors Thompson and Geddes, p. 206.

combination of images of what has been, along with a representation of what is, by means of which one personality distinguishes itself from another. A third group speak of it as an idea to be attained by regulated intercourse with other selves, and with the highest self of all, whose name for us is GOD. But whatever may be the contents of the idea for any particular philosopher, the general idea of 'personality' is one of the dominating ideas of our times.

These four characteristics, *Scientific*, *Evolutionary*, *Psychological*, and *Personalistic*, may be said to be the cardinal traits of prevalent philosophy, and they furnish a rough order of thought for the survey which is to follow.

PART II
NATURAL PHILOSOPHY

CHAPTER II

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY DISCRIMINATED

FOLLOWING the order of thought suggested in the last chapter, we begin the survey of Prevalent Philosophy with some attention to that form of it which deals directly and solely with the results of science. That form of philosophy is known as *Natural Philosophy*, and, to mark the significance of Natural Philosophy for contemporary thought, three things are necessary :—

First : We must examine, in some measure, the history of Natural Philosophy ;

Second : We must endeavour to understand the exact relation existing between Natural Philosophy and Natural Science ; and,

Third : We must look into the work of some recognized Natural Philosopher, who lives and works in these times.

The present chapter will follow this order.

§ 6. NATURAL PHILOSOPHY AND NATURAL THEOLOGY

Until very recent times Natural Philosophy

occupied the place in literature which in our day is assigned to the Philosophy of Religion. Natural Philosophy and Natural Theology were mutually inclusive. The province of study was the same for both. This province was the evidences of design in external nature; the indications of wise arrangements and contrivances in the physical universe; the law, order, and adaptations of the concrete world. The processes of study led to the same goal. This goal was the construction of an argument, based upon the law, order, contrivance, and adaptations in physical nature, and was intended logically to demonstrate the existence and control of a Supreme Intelligence who ordered the whole for the ultimate welfare of mankind. Therefore, it may be said that, for centuries, Natural Philosophy was an endeavour to find a knowledge of God by way of nature—a knowledge which came to men metaphysically.

The coincidence of Natural Philosophy with Natural Theology is demonstrated in such a book as Dr. Stirling's *Philosophy and Theology*, and in view of this coincidence we ought to begin our examination of Natural Philosophy with a short sketch of the history of Natural Theology.

§ 7. HISTORY OF NATURAL THEOLOGY

Most histories of Natural Theology begin with a quotation from Augustine's *City of God*,¹ wherein

¹ *De Civ. Dei*, vi. 5-12.

Augustine makes mention of Varro, a contemporary of Cicero and one of the most learned philosophers of those times. It is considered probable that Varro wrote an epitome of the teaching of the Stoics, who taught three species of theology—the poetic, the civil, and the physical or natural; the first for the theatre, the second for the world, and the third for the city. ‘The *first*,’ Varro said, ‘is the scheme of divine acts and beings which is suitable to the theatre and the world of literature and art, and its hierophants are the poets. The *second* is the mode under which a political community acknowledges its dependence on higher powers, and is under the charge of sacerdotal officials. But the *third* is the way in which the thinker and the man of science sees the great power of things. . . . He looks at the whole of things, at the great system of nature, above the range of art and of popular religion, and he finds the truest approach to divinity in a philosophy that seeks the deeper reality, the universal truth . . . in the essence of things.’¹

From Varro onwards, all through the Middle Ages, and in the writings of most philosophers, there occur references to *nature as a demonstration of divinity*, but it is generally recognized that in reality, there is no veritable Natural Theology to be found till the work expressly so named by

¹ Quoted from Wallace's *Scope of Natural Theology*.

Raymond de Sabunde, published in 1483. *Montaigne* made a translation of this work and published it in 1596. The scope of it is that two books are given by God to man. The first given was the book of nature. But by reason of blindness man was not able to read it. Therefore God gave to him the book of Holy Scripture. But Holy Scripture requires specially trained interpreters—the scholar and the priest. Nature, however, can be studied without a teacher. ‘It is an infallible science which any one can acquire in a month and without labour, and it requires no effort of memory.’ It is ‘the light of all the sciences, without which they are but vanities.’ In the exposition of nature he uses the four grades originated by Aristotle: that which *exists*, that which *lives*, that which *feels*, and that which *understands*, and he places man on the fourth grade.

The subject was very popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and there were many writers, but only two names stand out so prominently that they ought to be noted. The first is that of:—

FRANCIS BACON, who published a book called *Natural Theology*, or *Divine Philosophy*, in 1605. It formed part of his work for the ‘Advancement of Learning,’ and he describes ‘Divine Philosophy’ as ‘that knowledge or rudiment of knowledge concerning God which may be obtained by contemplation of His creatures; which knowledge may

be termed divine in respect of the object, and natural in respect of the light . . . Wherefore, by the contemplation of nature, to induce and enforce the acknowledgement of God, and to demonstrate His power, providence, and goodness, is an excellent argument, and hath been excellently handled by divers' (*Adv. of Learning*, ii. 6. 1).

The second name is that of:—

SIR ISAAC NEWTON, who gave his great authority to this form of literature, and did more than any other man in English history to make Natural Philosophy and Natural Theology belong together. The 'Scholion Generale' with which he concluded the third part of his *Principia* was accepted for generations as the surest proof of the existence of an Intelligent Creator, and a standing illustration of the relation of man to God.

Natural Philosophy in the form of Natural Theology lasted far on into the nineteenth century under the influence of such writings as those of *Paley* (1802), and the *Bridgewater Treatises*, so called because the Earl of Bridgewater, who died in 1829, left a sum of £8,000, which, with the interest that might accrue on it, was to be placed at the disposal of the President of the Royal Society for the time being, and paid by him to the person or persons he should appoint to write and publish 1,000 copies of a work on the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as manifested in the Creation. The most famous names associated with those

treatises are the names of *Chalmers*, *Whewell*, and *Buckland*.

Thus from the days of *Lord Bacon* to the days of *Thompson and Tait*, Natural Philosophy endeavoured to bridge over the interval between science and religion, and put forth a continuous effort 'by attentive study of natural facts to rise to a lively perception and admiration of the omnipotence, wisdom, goodness and justice of God.'

§ 8. BEGINNINGS OF MODERN SCIENCE

It was the broad light thrown upon nature by modern science which brought a wider outlook and deeper insight, and this larger view brought a change of attitude towards 'Physico-Theology' both amongst scientists and theologians.

Theologians on the one hand, began to feel that theology 'had little to gain by these demonstrations, at least any which had real vitality, and was not a form of words parasitically seeking to gain support from alien growths.' They began to suspect that a conception of God as the Architect and Manager of the world, which was the only conception of God underlying all such books as the *Bridgewater Treatises*, ought not to be considered either adequate or reverent. They began to realize that nothing could be more fatuous than hostility to science, but that it was foolish to seek for any reconciliation between theology and science, because theology and science belong to different

provinces in human life, aim at different ends, and are *both* needed by human nature.

Not all theologians and religious teachers have learned this lesson, for there is even yet a strong desire in certain quarters to invest theological capital in scientific novelties, and on this subject I cannot do better than quote the warning of the present Professor of Philosophy in the Harvard University :—

‘Science now employs concepts that seem less forbidding than its classic atomism. May not energy, or the electrically charged ether, or radio-activity, turn out to be the essence of God, or of man’s immortal soul? There are two reasons for distrusting such suggestions. In the first place they derive whatever religious meaning they possess from a loose and anthropomorphic version of science, and not from its rigorous formulation. In order that these scientific concepts shall serve as hints of a “spirit” in nature, they must be construed as substances and invested with characters drawn from the confused feeling of effort. Religion will indeed be reduced to extremities when it is dependent on the vagaries of the scientific imagination. In the second place, even though such scientific concepts were converted into spiritual substances, they would still yield no profit to religion. Hylozoism (cf. § 16) or even panpsychism is for religious purposes no better than atomism and no worse. Religion is indifferent to

the question of substance, for religion is made up of hope and fear; it is a solicitude for certain values. Its justification requires that the cosmos, whatever it is made of, shall in the end yield to desires and ideals—shall, in short, be good. This requirement the new science satisfies no better than the old, for science does not deal with values. . . . Whether these processes [the processes in nature] take place for better or worse it does not inquire. The explanation by ends, the reference to events and purposes, it seeks to dispense with altogether.’¹

Many responsible theologians recognize that all this is true, and while they gratefully draw illustrations from the field of scientific research, they do not build any theological arguments upon them.

Scientists on the other hand, have come to recognize that there are no grounds in reason why revelation should not be a fact, and that if it be a fact, it is a *scientific fact*, and ought to take its place as one of the experiences of human life, and be treated as a real part of that experience. In other words they have come to see that any knowledge men may have of God must, of necessity, come in and through the human spirit by a process which men have come to call revelation, and cannot come through any study of external nature; that, as was said of old time, ‘No man

¹ Perry, *Philosophic Tendencies*.

can by searching find out God,' and therefore to attempt to demonstrate God's existence, or to explain His nature and character, is no part of the work of the student of physical nature. To do these things is the proper work of the theologian, whose material for study is not physical nature but the religious life of man, with its hopes, fears, aspirations, and ideals; and who ought to apply to his material the same mental methods that the scientist applies to the world of nature.

Moreover, theology has to do with 'the good' as well as with 'God,' and if it is to be justified it must show that 'good' or 'goodness' is more than 'a phosphorescent glimmer on the surface of events.' But science finds not even a phosphorescent glimmer of 'morality' in nature nor on the surface of events, and, therefore, it is no part of the proper work of the scientist to tell us what is good and what is evil; or whether 'good' is better than 'evil.' To do these things for us is the work of the theologian, whose material is not only man's inner life of religious feeling, but also that moral conduct which is not found in nature nor on the surface of events.

§ 9. SEPARATION OF THEOLOGY AND NATURAL PHILOSOPHY

Because of this change of attitude on the part of theologians and scientists, the great and grave realities of the religious and the moral life are not

regarded as the concern of Natural Philosophy at all. Natural Philosophy, as such, takes for granted that any revelation which may come from God to men cannot be established by any effort of the speculative reason, neither can any assertions running counter to it be upheld; it also takes for granted that the reality and importance of 'goodness' may be open to demonstration on other grounds than the examination of external nature, but with these grounds Natural Philosophy has nothing whatever to do. The Natural Philosopher does not deny any such conclusions, but he does not expect to be led to any such. His material is the knowledge of external nature which comes to men through sensible experience, and out of this material he seeks to formulate universal and necessary determinations which will bring it into unity and system.

§ 10. DISTINCTION BETWEEN NATURAL PHILOSOPHY AND NATURAL SCIENCES

Such is the relationship of Natural Philosophy to religion and theology at the present time. But the aim of the Natural Sciences, and of Natural Philosophy as well, is to know nature, and it is therefore necessary to make clear *the distinction between Natural Philosophy and the Natural Sciences*.

In attempting this, the first thing to be said is

that hard-and-fast lines of demarcation between the two are out of the question. Both are equally 'natural' in the sense that both work within the zone in which hypotheses can be checked by observation and experiment. Yet the difference between them is vital. It may be stated in three aspects :—

(a) *Natural Philosophy is more comprehensive than Natural Science.* For science, properly speaking, there is no 'Nature.' 'Nature is to science,' says Professor William Wallace, 'a poetic, artistic, or metaphysical word.' Natural Science is a general name for a number of sciences, each of which has a restricted scope and a limited aim, deals with a group of phenomena roughly demarcated by common sense, and seeks to organize it into a system of coherent relations. In other words, a science takes a certain range of the natural world, it examines and experiments upon the things within that range according to certain rules and with the help of certain principles that can be amended or confirmed, and after examination and experiment it arranges the objects in some convenient relation or order. All this is done that men may know what things are, and what is their place and value in nature. But Natural Philosophy is concerned not with things, nor with their places and relations, but

with the mutual connexion of the sciences. It is the most general branch of Natural Science.

But it is no mere sum or generalization of Natural Science, for :—

(b) *Natural Philosophy is more visionary than Natural Science.* The use of the imagination in scientific research was demonstrated by *Professor Tyndall*, and is acknowledged by every competent worker. But in science the office of the imagination is to invent mental tools for the manipulation of facts and events, whilst in Natural Philosophy the office of the imagination is to try to find, never quite successfully, but never quite without success, a complete and unified notion of the external world and the inner life.

Because it is never quite successful :—

(c) *Natural Philosophy is more provisional than Natural Science.* The Natural Sciences can and do reach finality, because once the actual contents of facts have been learned, the knowledge so gained is unalterable. For example: It has been ascertained that water is composed of two gases in certain proportions, and such knowledge is as indestructible as the fact of water. The rate at which light travels, and the primary colours into which it can be divided by mechanical means, have been discovered, and that knowledge is as

unalterable as the fact of light. But Natural Philosophy can and does and must change as the confines of science are pushed back into the area of the unknown. It does not propose any final interpretation of nature, but merely a provisional interpretation consistent with such knowledge as science has gained.

CHAPTER III

NATURALISM AND NATURAL PHILOSOPHY

§ 11. RISE OF MODERN NATURALISM

It has been asserted in the last chapter that the new Natural Philosophy aims at arranging the natural sciences in relation to each other and to certain concepts, in order that a comprehensive and unified notion of the outer world and the inner life may be possible; and also that the modern Natural Philosopher makes no attempt to apply the discoveries of science to the ultimate problems which are perpetually presenting themselves to the human mind for solution, such as God, Revelation, Immortality, &c.

This is necessarily so because in his practical procedure the Natural Philosopher is a scientist; he has no court of appeal except to facts which reach him through his senses; he has no laws or forces which he is justified in calling to his aid save those which are expressed in natural phenomena; he does not pretend to give a final account of the world, but only of the way in which it may

be usefully observed; he does not put forward his theories as the whole of truth, or even as true in themselves, but as useful mental tools for arranging facts.

But this attitude on the part of the Natural Philosopher is only of very recent growth. The tendency towards it is growing stronger every day; nevertheless, since the dawn of the modern scientific era, there have been those who have taken the facts and laws discovered by scientific methods and formulated them into philosophies, which they have expressly put forward as not only true, but the whole truth, or the final statement of truth about Nature and Life, about God and the Soul. *Professor James* in *Pragmatism*, page 56, says that 'when the first laws were discovered, men were so carried away by the clearness, beauty, and simplification that resulted, that they believed themselves to have deciphered authentically the thoughts of the Almighty. His mind thundered and reverberated in syllogisms. He thought in conic sections and roots and ratios, and geometrized like Euclid. He made Kepler's laws for the planets to follow; he made velocity increase proportionately to the time of falling bodies; he made the law of the sines for light to obey when refracted; he established the orders, families, and genera of plants and animals, and fixed the distances between them. He thought out the archetypes of all things, and devised their variations;

and when we rediscover any one of his wondrous institutions we seize his mind in its very literal intention.'

Professor James, however, refers to that time before the modern scientific era when Natural Philosophy and Natural Theology meant the same thing. He expressly mentions the *first* mathematical, logical, and natural uniformities that were discovered. The Naturalists of the latter half of the nineteenth century *eliminated* 'God' from their calculations altogether. They attributed universality and finality to the concepts of physical science, and logically built up those concepts into a philosophy which bears the name of 'Naturalism.' This 'Naturalism' has assumed more than one form, and in one form or another it still has great influence in certain quarters of contemporary thought.

Its modern history is briefly as follows :—

§ 12. LOUIS BUCHNER

LOUIS BUCHNER (1824–1899) may be said to have been the father of modern Naturalism in its purely materialistic form. For him *Matter* was everything. His philosophy has been called '*The Monism of Matter.*' He taught that matter is manifested in several ways. It is manifest in force, motion, and heat, which are activities of matter. It is manifest in another form in 'consciousness.' What matter really is in itself, he

said, men did not know and could not know, but that force and consciousness are its activities, and the cause of these activities is contained in the substance. 'Matter is endowed with intellectual force as with physical force, and no man can foresee what further powers it may in the future reveal.'

§ 13. HUXLEY AND TYNDALL

In England the concepts of Buchner were elaborated by:—

PROFESSORS HUXLEY and TYNDALL into that form of Naturalism which is known as 'Scientific Materialism'—a phrase which is used to designate the doctrine that separates Nature from God, subordinates Spirit to Matter, and sets up unchangeable law as supreme. Professor Huxley described it as meaning 'the extension of the province of what we call matter and causation and the concomitant gradual banishment from all the regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity.'¹ *Dr. James Ward* says that this Naturalistic Philosophy, elaborated by *Huxley and Tyndall*, consists in the union of three fundamental theories:—

(a) the theory that nature is ultimately resolvable into a single vast mechanism;

(b) the theory of evolution as the working of this mechanism;

¹ *Collected Essays*, Eversley Edition, p. 159.

(c) the theory of psycho-physical parallelism or conscious automatism, according to which theory, mental phenomena occasionally accompany, but never determine, the movements and interactions of the material world.

The essence of this 'Scientific Materialism' is disclosed if we underline the phrases, '*a single vast mechanism,*' '*the working of this mechanism,*' '*conscious automatism.*' The universe was regarded as a vast machine; and it was prophesied by Professor Huxley that 'as surely as every future grows out of the past and the present, so will the philosophy of the future gradually extend the realm of matter and law until it is co-extensive with knowledge, with feeling, with action.'

§ 14. HERBERT SPENCER

HERBERT SPENCER is the best accredited exponent of Naturalism during the last half of the nineteenth century. But he modified the form given to it by Buchner and Huxley. He transformed the 'monism of matter' into a 'monism of force.' In the interval between his day and that of Buchner it had become evident that matter was not everything in the universe; that 'if it provided for some things like the planetary system, or the molecular structure of gases, it left out other things such as colour and the ether.' Moreover, attention was called to the fact that matter may not lose its form or its bulk, though at

the same time it may change its weight, and on the other hand that it may retain its weight and alter its form and bulk.

To account for these facts and to bring them within the range of his system of Naturalism, *Herbert Spencer* substituted 'force' for 'matter' as his first principle. He assumed that the mass of the universe and the energy of the universe were fixed in quantity. To use his own words, he accepted 'the indestructibility of matter' and the 'persistence of force' as 'true assumptions, because it is impossible to conceive their opposites.' He then proceeded to deduce all the phenomena of evolution from these two assumptions, but more especially from *the persistence of force*; for, said he, an ultimate analysis brings us down to the persistence of force, and on it a rational synthesis must be built up. He argued that all change of state in life or things is the result of displacements, juxtapositions, and variations in the pathway of molecules of matter—all these displacements, juxtapositions, and alterations of direction taking place in accordance with 'the laws of nature,' which act with such mechanical exactness that if men could observe widely enough, and calculate accurately enough, the entire past of the universe could be understood, and the future could be predicted in all its details, without assuming the existence of either spirit or supreme intelligence.

§ 15. AGNOSTICISM

The Naturalism of Huxley, Tyndall, and Spencer led to *Agnosticism* in regard to the three central problems of life:—God, Self, Immortality; but the Naturalism they tried to establish has been thoroughly discredited. Dr. James Ward, in his Lectures on *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, has exposed the fallacies of the Spencerian philosophy in a fashion which is merciless and complete; and the conclusion of his judgement is that ‘for the sake of an ideal, which is one of blind mechanical necessity, the historical is ignored, the metaphysical eliminated, substance and cause become fetishes, God a superfluous hypothesis, and mind an enigma, a troublesome by-product, a veritable ghost that cannot be laid. Naturalism can do nothing without this necessity, and Agnosticism can do nothing with it. For the one can only attain reality by treating necessary truths as truths of fact, and the other can find no necessity in facts at all. But these necessary truths (such, for example, as the existence of a First Cause, and that nature is not a mechanism, but a realm of ends) are truths of reason. They originate in the subject of experience, not in the object. If the object conforms to them, then all experience is rational; our reason is confronted by universal reason. Such is the world of spiritualistic monism, and to this world Natural-

ism and Agnosticism eventually lead us in spite of themselves, and their demurrer to theistic inquiries is not sustained.’¹

§ 16. HYLOZOISM

Since the days of *Herbert Spencer*, *Ernst Haeckel* has made a militant attempt to construe the universe on the principles of Scientific Materialism. The *Riddle of the Universe*, which was published in 1899, was very popular for a time. The book is full of dogmatic assertions. *Haeckel* has been spoken of as ‘a pope in the world of philosophy.’ He endeavoured to include ‘the monism of matter and force’ under a higher ‘monism of substance’—substance being the sum of matter which fills infinite space, and the sum of force, which is at work in infinite space and produces all phenomena.² He set out with the affirmation that ‘there is nothing in infinite space but mobile, elastic ether and innumerable separate particles—the primitive atoms scattered throughout it in the form of dust’;³ and the peculiarity of his scheme was that he revived an old theory that the atoms possess some sort of soul or psychical character. This is the reason why his theory is said to be *Hylozoistic*. He denied that the atoms have consciousness, but held that they are characterized by sensation.

¹ *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, Vol. II, p. 283.

² *Monism*, p. 21.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

‘Even the atom is not without a rudimentary form of sensation and will, or, as it is better expressed, of feeling and inclination.’¹ This rudimentary sensation is the essence and activity of substance. *But it is not Spirit*; it has no intelligible function in the production of thinking beings. It is simply and solely the product of chemical and physical agency. Consciousness and all other mental powers are functions of highly organized matter, and may be reduced to physical and chemical processes.² The atomic forces and ether vibrations combine to make the world, and they have made of it a world in which it is impossible to detect wise providence or moral order.

This is the essence of Haeckel’s system, but his significance amongst philosophers is exceedingly slight. The form of ‘Naturalism’ he represents is declared to be an impossible theory of the universe, and to consist of ‘*inconsequent materialism*.’ In fact, Materialistic Naturalism has been demonstrated to be inadequate and impossible on the following grounds:—

(a) The theory gives no satisfactory explanation of the way in which physical energy becomes mental, in which ‘matter in motion’ becomes a conscious thinking subject.

¹ *Riddle of the Universe*, p. 224.

² See *ibid.*, pp. 224–72.

(b) It does not account for the unity and continuity of the individual mental life.

(c) It moves in a circle, because the advocates accept the two scientific categories of 'matter' and 'mind,' they proceed arbitrarily to use the term 'matter' as covering what belongs to the category 'mind,' and then they attribute to 'matter' the qualities of 'mind.'

(d) It stands in opposition to the established results of psychology, which have been summed up in the Contemporary Science Series as follows:—'The spiritual world exists by itself, as a psychological reality, as positive and real as any material reality. Ideas, feelings, acts of willing, and even the simplest sensations are *sui generis*, and cannot be compared to physical phenomena.'

Some time, however, before the work of the critics of Naturalism had been accomplished, it had been felt both amongst scientists and philosophers that Naturalism was not Natural Philosophy, and that Natural Philosophy as such ought to be more 'methodological' and less 'metaphysical' than Naturalism; in other words, that it should be limited to the recognition of science and nature as they stand, and any speculation it contains should be confined to the search for theories necessary to classify facts and events.

§ 17. THOMPSON AND TAIT

The first attempt made in this direction in England was made in *Natural Philosophy* by *Thompson and Tait*. In the main their book was confined to observation, analysis, and criticism; but its peculiarity was that the authors advocated a doctrine which was new at the time amongst English philosophers—the doctrine that ‘*all change is either a transference or a transformation of energy.*’ Huxley and Spencer had said that all change was the result of the rearrangements of the molecules of matter brought about by the activity of force. Thompson and Tait said that all change was brought about by transformations of that force whose function, according to Spencer, is to rearrange matter. They fixed attention upon the quantitative equivalence of energy in its various forms, such as mechanical, radiant, and electrical. Most important of all, they suggested the possibility of unknown forms of energy, and the probability that the known forms are not all mechanical, and thus they opened many new vistas. Referring to their work, Dr. James Ward wrote in 1899: ‘For the present I think we are entitled as spectators of the march of science to say at least this much: Mechanics is no longer at the end of the nineteenth century what she was at the beginning. . . . Absolute supremacy is hers no more; at best she is but *prima inter*

paret, and even this, not because of the paramount value of the real knowledge she can bestow, but solely for her abstract purity of form. Should the science of energetics be destined to grow in importance at her expense, such an event would be by no means without a precedent.'

§ 18. PROFESSOR OSTWALD

The science of energetics was destined to grow, as Ward had suggested, and during the first decade of the twentieth century it has grown in importance to such an extent that the entire outlook of philosophers has been altered, and I cannot do better than close this brief sketch of 'Naturalism' in relation to 'Natural Philosophy' with a rough examination of Professor Ostwald's little volume on *Natural Philosophy*, since it will not only serve to illustrate the growth of energetics and give us a clear idea of what modern 'Natural Philosophy' means, but it will also form a true introduction to the various forms of 'Vitalism' which are to be treated in the next part of this book.

We are told by Professor Ostwald that the aim of Natural Philosophy is to enable the student to obtain—

(a) *Comprehensive Notions of the External World and the Inner Life.*

In order to obtain such 'comprehensive notions'

the first step is to analyse experience. But it must be carefully noted that 'experience' for the purpose of Natural Philosophy is not what is *felt* but what is *thought*. It is not a series of sensations, as it was for the older philosophers, but a series of impressions organized by the mind into knowledge.

Hence it is that Professor Ostwald begins his Natural Philosophy with an analysis of the processes of thinking by which notions concerning the natural world are formed, and of the way in which these notions are expressed in language. 'We have to deal first with the very science of ideas, to which language bears the relation only of a means—and often an inadequate means—to an end.'

Language is a system of signs—signs of many kinds—by means of which we are able to make use of experience. We have two sorts of experience. One of these is *simple* and *momentary*, as, for example, when a single horse is the object of our experience; the other is *complex*, and consists partly of memories, and partly of expectations, as, for example, when the memory of horses we have seen arises in our consciousness in its totality, and suggests the horses we may see in the future. There are in language, therefore, words which stand for simple and for complex concepts.

The experience which may be analysed into simple and complex concepts is related to a

number of different objects of thought. There is an infinite variety of concrete things; there are the numbers and weights of all these things, there is the room they appear to occupy in space, and there are the movements they appear to be making.

The science of the *Manifold* deals with the variety of things, and it is called 'Logic.' The science of *Quantity* deals with number and weight, and it is called 'Mathematics.' The science of *Space* deals with the room occupied, and it is called 'Geometry.' The science of *Motion* deals with the movements, and it is called 'Phoronomy.' And this group of sciences is called 'Formal,' because they are the mental tools by which the man of science does his work.

Having dealt in detail with the formal sciences, which have to do with order in thought, Professor Ostwald proceeds to classify and to construe the rest of the sciences.

(b) *Classification of Sciences*

They are classified after the pattern of the systems originated by Auguste Comte the French Philosopher. Below is the table :—

Physical Sciences—

Mechanics.

Physics.

Chemistry.

Biological Sciences—

Physiology.

Psychology.

Sociology.

(c) *Fundamental Concepts*

Each of these sciences is explained, and an attempt is made to organize them in relation to a 'fundamental concept.' Professor Ostwald shows that since the dawn of the scientific era they have been construed according to the 'Mechanistic Theory,' which reduces all nature to the terms of a machine (see last chapter). Because the evolution of mechanics antedates that of the other branches of physics, mechanics largely served as a model for the formal organization of the other sciences. But ready as scientists were to represent such life phenomena, as digestion, assimilation, and even generation and propagation, on mechanical principles, the courage of the most aggressive materialist never went so far as to consider that *mental life* could be explained on the principles of mechanics. Because of this, philosophers had to seek for another means to connect the mental world with the mechanical, and the 'fundamental concept' most common was that known as 'psycho-physical parallelism.' According to this theory the mental world exists alongside, and quite independent of, the mechanical, but things have been so pre-arranged that mental processes take

place simultaneously with certain mechanical processes in such a way that, although the two series do not influence each other in the least, they always correspond to each other precisely, and the extent to which they do so cannot be explained.

But Professor Ostwald has another 'fundamental concept' to offer, which has the quality of bringing the entire world both outward and inward, mechanical and mental, into relation with a single conception. The name given to it is 'Energy,' and he says that 'there is no difficulty in conceiving thought as energetic, however impossible it may be to think of it as mechanical.'

(d) *Vital Energy*

There are two forms of energy and two sources of energy. One form comes to us from the sun in a continual stream, and is transformed for the functions of life by the various living organisms on the earth. The other is discharged by a mysterious something which exists in all organisms in some degree. That mysterious something is generally called 'Life,' and it not only transforms the energy received from the outer world, but, in addition to this, it propagates energy along the nerve tracks of the organism. What is the form of this original energy is not known as yet, and only a thorough knowledge of nerve processes will solve the question; but it appears certain that an

organism is not merely a specialized piece of mechanism into which energy flows from the outside; it is also an entity, with the power to throw out energy impulses from within, and when this property of an organism passes a certain threshold of development it is called the 'soul' and can 'think and feel and will.' The highest form of thinking, feeling, willing energy known to us exercises the functions of mutual intercourse and mutual support, and this highest soul is the human soul or 'the unit of society.'

From all this it is inferred that the test of progress in human society is the education of human souls in such fashion that they shall so discharge their original energy as to economize for all future generations the amount of free energy which comes to us from the sun and is ever on the decrease.

Tested by this standard Professor Ostwald says our present civilization is 'barbarous.'

Such is a brief description of the thread running through the Professor's somewhat intricate book; and it is given because it illustrates the new point of view in Natural Philosophy, and also furnishes the key to the various forms of 'Vitalism' which are to be dealt with in the next section.

(e) The New Point of View

The new attitude in Natural Philosophy may be briefly stated as an abandonment of the

attempt 'to penetrate the mechanism of nature'; a disposition to see in mechanics, and in all the postulates of science, only instruments for the approximate description of nature and life; and an acknowledgement of the fact that, whilst mental activity is a continuation of natural process, it is not merely a continuation, but a kind of energy so different in kind from the mechanical, that it can never by any conceivability be expressed in terms of mechanism.

The key to 'Vitalism' is suggested by the question, 'What is that which not only transforms free energy but also discharges original energy?' What is that something to which Professor Ostwald gives the name 'soul'?—concerning which he says that 'the elucidation of this subject lies almost entirely in the future, since the idea just developed has but only begun to influence scientific work in this field. But judging from results that have already been obtained we may hope for a speedy development.'

PART III
VITALISM AND THE NEW
IDEALISM

CHAPTER IV

THE HISTORY OF VITALISM

§ 19. NATURAL PHILOSOPHY AND METAPHYSICS

WE have seen in the last chapter that the activities of modern Natural Philosophers are restricted to the realm of physical nature; but the forms of philosophy now to be considered belong to the realm of '*Metaphysics*.'

The general purpose of Metaphysics is to find an explanation of the *cause* and *end* of the universe, and to determine *what is real*. Such an aim is thought by many to be a will-o'-the-wisp, flitting gaily over the ground and beckoning men forward through confusion into obscurity. It is avowed by philosophers themselves that Metaphysics can never reach finality. In the nature of the case the Metaphysician is ever straining after an ideal. He feels powerfully that desire to know the cause and end of the universe, and what is real in life, which belongs to man's elemental nature. Man could not have invented Metaphysics unless he had a metaphysical faculty. Because he is what he is,

he will always want to know something about the cause and end of all things, and about the real behind all appearances; and he will not accept an answer that does not justify itself to his reason, as such, in his own particular mental atmosphere and time. For such an answer Metaphysicians always seek.

§ 20. A CHARACTERISTIC OF OUR TIME

An examination of modern Natural Philosophy has shown us that one characteristic of the mental atmosphere of our time is the abandonment of the mechanistic theory of the universe common to the various forms of Naturalism, along with a general recognition of the fact that there is something in the world that is *capable of acting*, something which is, in itself, both creating and self-creative.

The question 'What is that something in the world which is creating and self-creative?' may be said to form the keynote to that large and important field of recent metaphysics known as '*Vitalistic Philosophy*'; and the purpose of the chapters that follow in this part is to furnish some explanation of that '*Vitalistic Philosophy*.'

§ 21. TYPES OF VITALISM

'Vitalism' is a term which covers the thought of a large number of philosophers who work in different departments of research, but the many

varieties of 'Vitalistic Philosophy' may be classified under three prominent types :—

(a) The Philosophy of the Organism, or the New Theory of Life.

(b) The Philosophy of the Whole, or the New Theory of Evolution.

(c) The Philosophy of the Spirit, or the New Idealism.

Preliminary to any explanation of these types of Vitalism, a rough sketch of the history of the doctrine is necessary.

§ 22. HISTORY OF VITALISM

The history of Vitalism stretches back into ancient days. A clear and complete doctrine of Vitalism was taught by :—

(a) ARISTOTLE (385–322 B.C.). One of his works is called *Metaphysics*, but it was so named, not by Aristotle himself, but by his commentators, for the accidental reason that in the order of the works written by the Master, it followed one written on Physics. For that simple reason they called it 'After-physics.' But Aristotle spoke of what we call '*Metaphysics*' as *First Philosophy*, and of what we call '*Physics*' as *Second Philosophy*. He said that Second Philosophy, or Physics, was easier than First Philosophy, or Metaphysics, and he treated the easier first in the order of time, but not in the order of importance.

In the work called 'First Philosophy' or 'Metaphysics' three doctrines are expounded:—

- (a) The Doctrine of Matter;
- (b) The Doctrine of Essence;
- (c) The Doctrine of the Moving Cause;

and the drift of the argument is as follows:—

Everything that exists for man, under the conditions of mortal life, is a combination of matter and essence, and that which operates so as to bring about this combination is something which Aristotle calls *κίνησαν*, or the Moving Cause.

On all inorganic matter this Moving Cause operates from the outside; but in the case of organized existences, such as plants and animals, the Moving Cause operates from within, and may be spoken of as the *Soul*. This Moving Cause, or Soul, is ever pushing onwards towards perfect existence.

Hence there are, in the world, a series of souls in an ascending scale, or more correctly a range of existences containing a *graduated quantity of soul*. In plants, for example, the soul is only vital enough to utilize food for the maintenance and reproduction of the plant, and to control its growth. In animals the soul is vital and active enough to secure movement for the acquisition of food, shelter and reproduction. In man the soul is strong enough, not only to secure the movements

necessary for these purposes, but it is vital enough to find expression in intelligence, and does not stop even at intelligence, for it uses man's intelligence as an apparatus for further movement towards perfection.

In this teaching of Aristotle are to be found the roots of all the doctrines of Vitalism which have existed in the course of history down to our own day. In similar forms the doctrine emerges again and again. For example:—

(b) PARACELSUS (1493–1541), who is known as '*The Luther of Science*,' taught that the 'Moving Cause' of Aristotle was conscious of its own existence, and that it was always using physical forces and physical bodies for its own ends.

In more recent times the most important name in connexion with the doctrine is that of—

(c) LAMARCK, a Frenchman born in Picardy in 1744, who laboured with great diligence as a student of natural science, especially in the department of botany; he published a number of works, and died in Paris in 1829.

His name is rarely mentioned in any list of *Modern Classical Philosophers*, because for many years his theories were in disrepute. Charles Darwin wrote to Hooker in 1844, 'Heaven forbid me from Lamarckian nonsense . . . but the conclusions I am led to are not widely different from his.'

The reason why the doctrines were in general

discredit, and why Darwin spoke of them as 'Lamarckian nonsense,' was that Lamarck supported them with unwarranted and wholly fanciful illustrations. It is said that he was prevented, partly by blindness and partly by poverty, from collecting facts in support of his theories, and had to go for his details to old-fashioned and incompetent observers. *Baron Cuvier* (1769-1832) laughed at him, and he was laughed at as 'Poor Lamarck' for years; but 'wisdom is justified of her children,' and 'Poor Lamarck' is now coming to his own. There is a decided reversion in his favour amongst vitalist philosophers, and one important phase of 'Vitalism' is known as 'Neo-Lamarckianism' because it gives so much prominence to what is called 'The Lamarckian Factor' in the process of evolution.

This 'Lamarckian Factor' is contained in the second of the 'four laws of nature,' given in his *Natural History*, and it reads as follows :—

'The production of a new organ in an animal body results from a new want arising and continuing to be felt and from the new movement this want initiates and sustains.'

In other words, Lamarck assumed the evolution of all species from a common source, and insisted that variations were due to a 'psychical factor' in nature. In all living organisms he pre-supposed conscious, or at least sentient, activity, directed to the satisfaction of needs, appetites, or desires; and he asserted that living organisms manifest

psychical activity as distinct from physical passivity and inertness.

Neo-Lamarckians expound 'The Lamarckian Factor' in the form of two great principles:—

(a) An organism is endowed with the faculty of responding to any change of its environment by an alteration of its functional state and form.

(b) An organism has the faculty of keeping and storing its variations and of handing them down to the next generation.

These two principles are known as—

(a) Active Adaptation, and

(b) Inheritance of Acquired Characteristics ;

and they are based on such natural facts as the following :—

Acts of volition originate in random movements of a new-born infant ; certain of these accidental movements, which happen to realize pain or to afford some pleasure are remembered, and are used another time to bring forth what is liked, or to remove what is disliked, so that in the act of an infant before it has come to self-consciousness, there are four *factors which are psychical* :—

(a) Liking and disliking ;

(b) Keeping in mind ;

(c) Volition ;

(d) Judgement.

Hence, according to Neo-Lamarckianism, there is a psychical element in life, which belongs to life because it is life, and developes into 'self-consciousness' in human beings.

Many 'Vitalists' criticize 'Neo-Lamarckianism' severely, but it is enough for our purpose to understand its central significance as one element in the development of the doctrine of 'Vitalism.'

(d) *Goethe and Vitalism*

In their work on *Evolution* in the 'Home University Library,' Messrs. Thompson and Geddes mention the name of *Goethe* as one of the modern pioneers of the doctrine of Vitalism. In the strict sense of the term Goethe was not a philosopher but a poet. He knew a great deal about philosophy, as about most other things that were to be known in his day. In the course of his reading he was enamoured with the philosophy of *Spinoza*, the famous pantheist, and he became the leading spirit in a school of writers known as 'Romanticists,' who made popular the idea of a 'world-spirit' as the 'Moving Cause' in nature—a world-spirit unfolding itself into, and manifesting itself through, all the variety of things and beings.

To that extent Goethe may, with exactitude, be said to have been a pioneer of modern Vitalism.

(e) Modern Vitalism

In our day the most influential Vitalist Philosophers are Dr. Hans Driesch, the leading expositor of the Philosophy of the Organism; Professor Bergson, the famous teacher of the Philosophy of the Whole; and Professor Eucken, the chief representative of The Philosophy of the Spirit.

The teaching of these three will be explained in the following chapters.

CHAPTER V

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ORGANISM; OR, THE NEW THEORY OF LIFE

DR. HANS DRIESCH is one of the foremost embryologists in Europe. He delivered Gifford Lectures in the years 1907 and 1908 on *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism*. The Lectures have been issued in two massive volumes, which contain a deep and original vindication of 'Vitalism.' Professor J. A. Thomson has described them as 'a fine gymnasium for intellectual athletes,' but no special fitness for intellectual athletics is required to rehearse their general trend.

§ 23. DR. DRIESCH'S MAIN AIM

In the first place, by an exhaustive and somewhat wearisome analysis of biological facts, Dr. Driesch endeavours to discover and to establish a 'general concept' (cf. § 73) which shall serve as a foundation for a philosophy of living forms and organic movements. His aim, in his own words, is to study living organisms analytically, by the aid of experiment; to find out laws in the phenomena of these living organisms; and to analyse such laws, and precisely at that point to leave

the realm of natural science proper, and enter that of philosophy.¹ In other words, he studies with patient care the processes in the living organism which lead from the egg to the adult, in order that he may decide the question whether life is only a combination of chemical and physical elements, or whether it has elemental laws, that is to say, *laws of its own*.

§ 24. THE SEA-URCHIN'S EGG

Such a study can only be carried on successfully with reference to a concrete case, and the development of the common sea-urchin is selected, because for various reasons most of the analytical experimental work has been done on the germs of that animal. A long series of elaborate experiments on sea-urchin's eggs are described, and lead to the determination of a number of facts, the most important being :—

(a) If the parts of an egg be disarranged, they will right themselves so as to produce a perfect egg.

(b) If a part of an egg be injured, all the remaining parts will unite to restore the injury.

(c) If a small part of one egg be taken and placed in suitable surroundings, it will develop a complete sea-urchin.

It is also determined by experiment that as a

¹ *The Science and Philosophy of the Organism*, Vol. I, p. 10.

living organism the animal is *built up of different parts*, and differs from bodies like crystals, which are mere aggregates or *arrangements of identical units*.

Finally, the conclusion is reached that physical and chemical elements cannot be made to account for the development of an individual organism, and there must be something which is to be regarded as the sufficient reason for individual form production. That something is not a short expression for a more complicated state of affairs. It is not a specialized arrangement of inorganic events. *It is Life*, and Life is not applied physics and chemistry. *It is something apart*. In other words the result is the establishment of *the autonomy* of Life, or the fact that Life is a law to itself, creating and self-creative.

§ 25. A NEW NAME FOR LIFE

In each of his experiments Dr. Driesch has found a constant factor which he has indicated so far by the letter 'E,' but when he has finished his experiments with the sea-urchin's egg he gives a name to it. That name is 'Entelechy,' a word which is taken from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (cf. § 14), but the word is used as a mould into which to pour new meaning. When Driesch uses it for 'life' he means it to convey the idea that life is something '*which bears its end in itself*' or carries within itself the determination of its own destiny.

Having established, to his own satisfaction, this 'general conception,' the study of the development of the *egg* of an animal is brought to a close.

§ 26. THE REGULATORY ASPECTS OF LIFE

The next process is to study the functioning of the *adult* individual form. The author turns from 'analysing the potencies of the organism to examine the regulatory aspects of organisms.' The term 'regulatory' refers to some alteration made in the normal processes of an organism by which it becomes adapted to changes that affect it from without, or from within. Illustrations of regulatory processes in adults are to be found in the adaptation of plants to their surroundings, the adaptation of the organs of digestion and assimilation in animals to different kinds of food, the maintenance of blood-heat in vertebrates, and the fight which all organisms wage against organic poisons. All these and similar processes are carefully examined; and whilst the result is negative so far as new proof of the concept of 'Entelechy' is concerned, it is positive in so far as it tends to establish the idea that a developed organism has the power to regulate itself in relation to many changes within and without, and this fact suggests the question, 'How could there be a machine, the chemical constituents of which were such as to correspond adaptively to every requirement?' Dr. Driesch says that he feels unable to formulate what happens

in such a manner as to think of a machine arranging all these regulations. That a machine should do these things is, so far as his analysis goes, absolutely unimaginable and unthinkable.

§ 27. THE DESCENT OF LIFE

Having examined (1) the potencies of the developing individual, and (2) the regulatory aspects of the adult organism, attention is turned to *the descent of organisms and the transformation of species*.

Since the days of Darwin two great theories of descent have been advocated by scientists. These theories are known as (a) The *Darwinian* Theory, (cf. § 70), and (b) The *Neo-Lamarckian* Theory (cf. § 22). Dr. Driesch examines both these theories, and comes to the conclusion that only a small part of each will stand criticism. In the Darwinian theory, the general statement that Natural Selection may share in the elimination of those individuals which do not show useful adaptations, can be conceded as a hypothesis; and in the Lamarckian theory, the general statement that when a creature is born adapted to certain conditions, its adaptedness may be regarded as due to inheritance slowly accumulated by parent organisms, can be accepted, so long as it is regarded only as a working hypothesis.

These are the only parts of the two well-known theories of descent which will stand the test of scientific criticism, and other principles besides

these are wanted to explain the origin of species and the theory of descent.

The fact is that we know very little about evolution, but what we do know makes it reasonable to conclude that there exists *a certain organizing power* at the root of the transformation of species, and at the root of the transmission of characteristics—a power we do not understand, which we see only partly manifested, but which is not explained either by the Darwinian or the Neo-Lamarckian theories of evolution.

§ 28. LIFE AND ANIMAL MOVEMENTS

From the study of 'Theories of Descent' attention is directed to *the study of animal movements*, which may roughly be divided into three classes: *reflex, instinctive, and active.*

By far the most important of these three is the kind of movement called *action*. Action is movement directed by experience. Two points in this description are to be noted. *First*, there is a specific combination and exercise of the muscles of an animal which always responds to some specific stimulus. If the stimulus differs, the combination of muscles will correspondingly differ. *Second*, each combination and exercise of the muscles is *directed* by experience. Where there is no experience there is no action in the true sense of the term.

Hence in an animal there must be something which '*acts*,' which has come to possess, through

experience, the innate faculty of acting appropriately to circumstances. It is impossible to think of a machine so acting. What is it, then, that acts? Of course it is Life, but *it is Life in a special form.*

§ 29. LIFE AS PSYCHOLOGICAL

This special form of Life is the elemental agent in an organism which *directs* it, and must be distinguished, in thought, from the natural agent which *forms* it. The formative and regulative element has been named 'Entelechy,' and a name is necessary for the special directive element. It is named 'Psychoid,' because the directing agent in action is not a 'psyche' or 'ego' or 'I,' but at the same time it can only be properly described in terms which are psychological. It is a psychological factor in nature, it is something more than a mere centre *in* the brain; it is something which *uses* the faculties of the brain 'as a piano player uses a piano.'

If this be so, the famous theory of 'Psychophysical Parallelism' (cf. § 18 (c)), in so far as it means that where there is mental action, there is a continuous chain of events which are strictly chemical or mechanical combined with a continuous chain of thoughts, each single element on one side corresponding with an element on the other side, falls to the ground.

The foregoing data form the foundation for a synthetic philosophy of the Organism. They have

indicated that there is something in nature which is not to be expressed or described in the terms of the natural factors already known to science, something which may be described as the agent which forms bodies out of varied material, and uses physical and chemical forces as its instruments; an agent which regulates the functions of assimilation, adaption, action, reproduction, and inheritance, uses brains as tools, and pushes forward and directs all the processes of life, and which may be spoken of as Entelechy and Psychoid.

Upon this basis Dr. Driesch sketches an outline of a complete system of philosophical biology.

§ 30. A SCHEME OF PHILOSOPHICAL BIOLOGY

In order that such a scheme may be developed, the general concepts involved in such terms as Entelechy and Psychoid must be brought into relation with certain other concepts such as 'energy,' 'causality,' and 'force.' Dr. Driesch does this, and the issues of the entire argument may be summed up in the following propositions:—

(a) The mysterious something which develops organisms, and directs their functions and activities, is not energy, nor is it force, nor is it 'the property of a body.'

(b) It is something like to which there is nothing in organic nature; something which by its very nature may suspend movements or set

free suspended movements as circumstances may require ; something which can transform energy at rest into energy in operation ; something which has a definite end in view and is always working towards it.

(c) It has no chemical substance as its basis, nor any compound of chemical substances, but it controls all chemical substances and combinations.

(d) It does not arise from material conditions of any sort.

(e) It has no localization in space, and cannot be imagined like a point consisting of 'something moving through space, now in this and now in that direction.' It is of a 'non-spatial nature.'

(f) It cannot be divided in the sense that it can be cut to pieces, yet it can manifest itself in manifold organisms and in various degrees of potency, but wherever it is, it is there as one whole.

(g) It begins a new manifestation every time a new actual individual is started, and with death it ends one ; but what that manifestation was, as an individual, before birth, and what it is after death, is not known. 'We are not able to say whether it was and will be anything individual at all in these two periods or not.'

(h) In its individual, and particularly in the

special form manifested in a human being, it is to be called a 'psychoid' because it can only be described in psychological terms, and the relation of a psychoid to natural processes can best be described by an illustration. 'I am sitting in my chair and want to write. A lamp recently bought, and not quite known to me in its construction, stands on the table. The lamp begins to smoke. My attention is therefore directed to the construction of the lamp. I compare its construction with other lamps I remember. I move my hand to a certain screw, and will to move the screw. I see and feel my hand touching and moving the screw. The smoking of the lamp ends.'

'I' *myself* do all this. It is 'I' who see, remember, think, feel, will, act, and produce effects that are outside me. Thus 'I' am not only influenced but I influence. 'I' am a real link in the whole chain of events and the real agent in the reflex processes of influencing and being influenced. 'I' UNDERSTAND vitalism, for I am a vitalistic factor myself, and it is only by *knowing myself and what I can do*, that I can form any notion of what goes on in nature around me.'

The examination of this illustration in all its details forms Dr. Driesch's direct justification of his doctrine, the essence of which is that life cannot be understood without the concepts 'Entelechy'

and 'Psychoïd' together with the concepts energy, force, and mass.

Dr. Driesch suggests that such 'Vitalism' furnishes *a true basis for morality, and three dim windows into the Absolute*, or windows that look towards the conception of God. These windows are *Morality, Memory*, and the idea of *It*; and with the indication that the concept of 'God' is the eternal task of science, the work is finished.

The foregoing is a brief, but I believe it is an accurate, sketch of 'Vitalism' as it is expounded by that 'Proteus of Vitalism,' Dr. Hans Driesch.

His doctrine has been assailed, and not without effect, both from the scientific and the philosophical standpoints.

§ 31. SCIENTIFIC OBJECTIONS

The *scientific* objections to Dr. Driesch's 'Vitalism' may be summed up in four considerations:—

(a) Each cell of a sea-urchin's egg, and of every other egg, contains samples of different substances, and only so long as it contains a sample of each substance does it retain its capacity for development. Hence the development *may* be the result of a mechanical mixture the proportions of which we do not understand.

(b) The equivalent of the energy which leaves a body as mechanical work or heat to that which enters it in the chemical form of

food has been established. This gives *hope* of attaining to a chemistry of life.

(c) The nervous discharges of energy in animals reveal themselves as the result of physico-chemical changes, and the nervous process does not owe its mystery to a new form of energy, but to the fact that the mode of energy displayed occurs in structures of great chemical complexity.

(d) Life did once originate upon this planet from matter which was not alive, and even now some inorganic phenomena present at least remote analogies with certain vital processes.¹

§ 32. PHILOSOPHICAL OBJECTIONS

The key to the *philosophical* objections is that Dr. Driesch's 'Entelechy' is not the *final cause* of an organism, as he makes it out to be. If it were, it would be prior in time, and as he presents it, it is only prior in thought. Hence it is nothing more than an *efficient cause*, bearing the same relation to the organism that certain muscular movements do to the process of eating, the final cause of which is to satisfy hunger.

How far such objections vitiate '*The Philosophy of the Organism*' each man must decide for himself. In any case it represents a new, fascinating, and very suggestive point of view from which to regard nature and life.

¹ See *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. X, No. 3, p. 554.

CHAPTER VI

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE WHOLE; OR, THE NEW THEORY OF EVOLUTION

§ 33. THE OLD POINT OF VIEW

IN order to appreciate the Vitalistic point of view from which the whole of nature and life is regarded, it is necessary to recall the dominant point of view concerning the world since the time of Darwin.

After the publication of *The Origin of Species* in 1859, the idea gradually gained ground that a process of evolution, working according to mechanical principles, would not only account for the production of the earth itself, but for all the forms of life that exist upon it. There are many foremost men of science who still think it probable that a time will come when life itself will be demonstrated to be nothing more than a mechanical combination of chemical and physical elements; but in those days, almost without exception, and without any question, scientific men accepted the theory that chemical and physical

elements had become more and more complex in the course of time, till at last, when these elements had become compounded into the material substance known as the human brain, matter began to think and to speak. It was assumed that 'mind' was nothing more than a function of brain, 'so that if you could remove all brains off the surface of the globe there would be no mind left in the universe.' The idea of the 'Soul' was regarded as an illusion due to the overweening vanity of mankind, and it was thought that the concept of 'God' was unnecessary. About the year 1890 Dr. Hutchison Stirling said that he was warned by a publisher that 'the No-God men have the pull at present.'¹ The evolutionary process took the place of God. It was also supposed that men were cleverly constructed machines, having no freedom to mould circumstances, but being moulded by them. 'Man,' said a philosopher in the latter half of the nineteenth century, 'is the sum of parents and nurse, of time and place, of pleasure and weather, of sound and light, of food and clothing. His will is the necessary result of all these causes, bound to a law of nature, like the planet in its course, like the plant in its soil.'² 'The freedom of the will,' said another, 'is not an object for critical scientific inquiry at all, for it is a pure dogma, based on an illusion,

¹ *Philosophy and Theology*, by Stirling, p. 16.

² *Krieslauf des Lebens*, Moleschott, p. 436.

and has no real existence.'¹ The same philosopher spoke of *the notion of immortality* as 'inexcusable,' as 'the highest superstition,' and 'in hopeless contradiction with the most solid empirical truths of modern science.'²

§ 34. THE NEW POINT OF VIEW

In recent years a change has come over the thought-world. A new point of view is emerging. The old dogmatic position is being assailed and modified both by Science and Philosophy.

Amongst the men who have helped to bring about this change there is none whose work is more famous, or whose philosophy is so fashionable, as that of Professor Bergson. His thought is said to be 'tunnelling its way through the academic stolidity of all countries.' He is a Professor in the 'Collège de France' in Paris, and is a thinker of commanding distinction; but exaggerated claims have been made for his originality. No one man can be said to have discovered the new point of view. It has emerged naturally in the course of the pursuit of truth. Bergson has done much to make 'Vitalistic Philosophy' attractive, by the limpidity and neatness, the incisiveness and flexibility, of his language; and it is in this facility that his originality chiefly lies. *E. Hermann*, who is one of his inter-

¹ *The Riddle of the Universe*, Haeckel, p. 15.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 188, 210.

preters and admirers, says that 'when analysed in the dryest light his style appears as the most wonderful vehicle through which philosophic thought ever found speech.'

In spite, however, of this skill in the presentation of ideas, Bergson's thought is by no means easy to follow. On the contrary, it is very difficult. His ideas are held in solution in a medium of illustrations drawn from an extended range of mathematics, biology, and psychology. Nevertheless it is possible, especially after a course of modern Natural Philosophy such as that indicated in the last chapter, to precipitate his ideas and in some measure to understand their significance; and the purpose of the following is to help the reader to do this.

It is impossible to give a simple and straightforward analysis of Bergson's philosophy as it is contained in the whole range of his works, because it not only develops but alters in contents and in form. *H. Wildon Carr* says that it does not 'appeal to us for acceptance on the ground of its consistency and harmony,' and *David Balsillie* makes the statement that 'Bergson's cosmology changes like a chameleon,' if the entire range of his writings be taken as one whole. Hence any attempt at resolving Bergson's ideas must be confined, in the main, to the ideas contained in the most mature of his books, which is known as *Creative Evolution*.

§ 35. BERGSON'S CHIEF WORKS

For the sake of information, however, it may be stated that his three chief works are :—

(a) *Time and Free Will*, published in Paris in 1888 and in England in 1910—a study of the concept of 'Duration' in relation to human experience.

(b) *Matter and Memory*, published in Paris in 1896 and in England in 1911—a study of human experience in relation to nature.

(c) *Creative Evolution*, published in Paris in 1901 and in England in 1911, containing the fundamental conceptions of the other two, modified, formulated and applied in a *new theory of evolution*.

The foundation principle of this new theory lies in the statement that the reality in the universe is *Life*; 'the key to the explanation of the problem of reality and knowledge does not lie within us in the mind, as the idealist contends, nor without us in space, as the realist contends, but in life.'¹

Therefore the task of the philosopher is to seek to understand life.

In pursuit of this task Professor Bergson deals in detail with the several modes in which life manifests itself to us, and with the characteristics of life as he sees them. I will venture to arrange

¹ H. Wildon Carr, *The Philosophy of Change*, p. 14.

the modes and characteristics of life which he speaks of, in a convenient order, and attempt to explain them.

§ 36. THE MODES OF LIFE

- (a) Consciousness.
- (b) Intelligence and Intuition.
- (c) Instinct.
- (d) Duration, Change, and Time.
- (e) Movement and Matter.

These modes of life might be written out in the form of a series of propositions as follows :—

Reality is Life.
 Life is Consciousness.
 Consciousness is Intelligence and Instinct.
 Intelligence and Instinct are Duration.
 Duration is Change.
 Change is Time.
 Time is Movement.
 Movement is the essence of Matter.
 Therefore *all* is Life ; and
 Life is Reality.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LIFE

- (a) Freedom.
- (b) Purpose.
- (c) Manifoldness, Mobility, and Torpidity.

EXPLANATIONS OF THE MODES OF LIFE

(A) CONSCIOUSNESS

Consciousness as a mode of life is explained on pages 188 ff. of *Creative Evolution*, where Bergson says that life and consciousness are identical. Life, that is to say consciousness, has been launched into matter in a broad stream, and in the course of evolution has become split into two forms—*intelligence* and *instinct*—and these two streams are often mingled in the human consciousness in such a special way as to make manifest what is practically a third form of consciousness named *intuition*.

Consciousness, or Life, is the motive force in evolution, insinuating itself into inert matter, bending physical and chemical forces and consenting to go a part of the way with them into the habits of inert matter, in order to draw it little by little, magnetized, as it were, to another track. It is *latent* in things and *active* in plants and animals; but there are no definite characteristics distinguishing the plant from the animal, and in the animal kingdom consciousness is proportioned to the power of choice. There is no organism in existence where consciousness is not, but in some cases it is nullified or at zero; whereas, in man, it is condensed into intellect, with a fringe of intuition, and in animals it is shaped into instinct, containing, here and there, to all appearance,

some traces of intelligence. Hence, to understand life as manifested through intelligence and instinct, we must ask the questions :—

(1) What is Intelligence, and what is its relation to Instinct?

(2) What is Intuition, and wherein does it differ from Intelligence and Instinct?

(3) What is Instinct as opposed to Intelligence?

(B) INTELLIGENCE.

(a) Intelligence is Different from Instinct

The first step in the answer to the question ‘What is intelligence and what is its relation to instinct?’ which is given by an examination of Bergson’s writings, appears to be that intelligence on the one hand, and instinct on the other hand, *stand over against each other*, since both are ‘innate forms of consciousness. Intelligence is the ‘innate tendency in consciousness to establish relations,’ and instinct is ‘the innate knowledge of things.’ (In this context the word ‘relations’ means the kind of connexion or correspondence or contrast that prevails between persons and things.)

(b) The Generating Cause of Intellect and Instinct

We take *the second step* in answer to the question if we seek to understand what we are

told about the formation of intelligence and about the use which consciousness makes of it. The generating cause is Life. Intellect is *one of the terminal points* in the evolution of life, and instinct another. As individual intellects we live in a matrix of consciousness, like gems enclosed in a mass of rock; but whilst the gems are different in composition from the surrounding rock, our intellects are but condensations of that by which we are surrounded. Another illustration is to be found in Astronomy, which tells us of nebulae in which shining nuclei are embedded—so around the intellect there is consciousness, and beyond the individual consciousness there is the social consciousness, and beyond that the universal consciousness, out of which the shining nucleus of the intellect is formed by condensation, and in which it lies embedded. *The originating cause* of intellect has been 'a narrowing, a shrinking, a condensation of consciousness.' 'Intellect reveals its origin in the fringe which still surrounds it as a kind of nebulosity surrounding a luminous centre.'

(c) *The Function of Intellect*

.*The third step* towards Bergson's answer to our question is to assimilate what he says about *the function of intellect and the purpose that it serves*. I cannot do better than quote two or three sentences on this matter from Wildon Carr's book,

The Philosophy of Change. 'What, then, is the purpose of the intellect? It is to the mind what the eye or the ear is to the body. Just as in the course of evolution the body has become endowed with certain special sense organs which enable it to receive the revelation of the reality without, and at the same time to limit the extent and the form of that revelation, so the intellect is a special adaptation of the mind which enables the being endowed with it to view the reality outside it, but which at the same time limits both the extent and the character of the view the mind takes. When we see a special organ like the eye, we can see its usefulness to the creature it serves depends quite as much on what it excludes as what it admits. If the eye could take in the whole of visible reality it would be useless. It is because it limits the amount of light it admits, and narrows the range of visible things, that it serves the life purpose. The intellect appears to have been formed by the evolution of life for a like purpose.'¹

The power of the intellect as an instrument of knowledge is therefore limited; and this limitation of the intellect is the cause of the problems of the world. They are the forms which the intellect gives to what is outside us; and they exist because the intellect cannot discern the underlying continuity and reality.

¹ *The Philosophy of Change*, p. 22.

The proper function of the intellect is to deal *practically* with matter, that is to say, to deal with matter for the purposes of life, to keep us mentally alive, and to secure our advancement in life and personality. By means of the intellect we see things as if they were solid, inert, and unchanging matter, and we see what we call the 'laws' by which they act and react on each other, because it is useful for our living so to do, and because it serves the ends of the Life of which we are individual parts.

(d) The Metaphor of the Cinematograph

The last step we need to take in trying to understand Bergson's theory of intellect is to endeavour to comprehend his famous metaphor that the intellect is 'cinematographical.' Using in the main his own words it may be explained as follows:—

Suppose we wish to portray the marching past of a regiment of soldiers 'cinematographically,' what we do is to take a series of snapshots of the regiment, and to throw these instantaneous views on the screen so that they replace each other very rapidly. Each photograph represents the regiment in a fixed attitude, and we could not see the regiment marching past if we had to do with the photographs alone, however much we might look at them. We should never see them animated if we had nothing but photographs. 'With immo-

bility set beside immobility we could never make movement,' and, in order that the pictures may be animated, there must be movement somewhere.

So, when the intellect looks at the world outside us, it appears as if we saw a vast number of *fixed things* lying side by side; they appear to be real, and in a sense they are real. It also seems as if there were a succession of fixed states in the things we see, such as youth, maturity and old age in animals, and twigs, leaves, blossom, fruit, in trees; but as a matter of fact, there is movement going on continually behind these apparently fixed things and states. *That movement is necessary for us to see them as they are.* Movement is one of the *modes of life*. It really is life itself, but the intellect cannot detect that it is so. The intellect can only represent the fact in words after it has been detected by intuition.

(C) INTUITION

Intuition is consciousness in a less concentrated state than intellect. It is the fringe which surrounds the intellect of an individual human being. *It is purified instinct.* It enables human beings to grasp what intelligence fails to give them, and indicates the means of supplementing knowledge. It is that faculty in a human being which utilizes the mechanism of intelligence to show the limitation of intellectual knowledge, and suggests the vague feeling of what must take the place of

intellectual moulds. It is the medium of sympathetic communication between us and the rest of the living. It is our chief '*Metaphysical instrument*,' or the chief means by which we discover new truth. 'Every one of us has the opportunities to exercise it in some degree. Any one, for example, who has been engaged in literary work, knows perfectly well that after long study has been given to a subject, when all the documents have been collected and all sketches made, one thing more is necessary—an effort, often painful, to set oneself in the heart of the subject and get from it an impulse as profound as possible, when there is nothing more to be done than follow it. This impulse once received, sets the spirit on a path where it finds again all the information it had collected and a thousand other details. The impulse develops itself . . . the further you go the more is revealed. . . . For it is nothing but a direction of movement; and, although capable of infinite development, is simplicity itself. Metaphysical intuition seems to be of the same kind. Here the counterpart of the sketches and documents of literary production is the totality of observations and experiences collected by the positive sciences.'¹

In other words 'intuition' stands as a name for those sudden impulses which come to men, how and why no man can precisely tell, but which are

¹ Bergson's *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 56.

the result of immediate contact with reality. Such impulses are fugitive and incomplete, and all that a philosopher can do is to follow up the path of thought indicated ; but if one such impulse could be prolonged beyond a few instants, if it could be generalized, and above all, if we could be assured of points of external reference in order not to go astray, the object of all philosophy would be reached.

The condition upon which such impulses are received is that men shall be in sympathy with the life that is outside them. 'There must be a living sympathetic acquaintance with things, distinguished from the knowledge *about* them that touches only the outer surface of reality. The only way in which to apprehend reality's thickness is either to experience it directly by being a part of reality oneself, or to evoke it in imagination by sympathetically divining some one else's inner life. If you are to know reality you must dive back into the flux itself, or turn your face towards sensation, that fleshbound thing which rationalism has loaded with abuse.'¹

(D) INSTINCT

The question still remains, 'What is instinct ?' It is *not* undeveloped intelligence. Like Intellect, it is *one of the terminal points of evolution*.

¹ James, *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 249.

Originally Intellect and Instinct were intermingled in a vague and indeterminate form of consciousness. In other words there was neither Intellect nor Instinct, but only Life or consciousness. Immanent in Life, however, were two powers which were bound to part company in course of growth. Evolution took two lines; on one line reaching its culmination in man and his intellect, and on the other line reaching its culmination in the insect, especially in ants, bees, wasps, &c. Both Instinct and Intelligence imply 'knowledge,' but in the case of Instinct, knowledge is unconscious and *immediately expressed in action*, whereas in Intelligence knowledge is conscious, and it is *thought about before it is acted upon*. In Instinct knowledge is implicit, but in Intelligence it is explicit. 'When the horse-fly lays its eggs on the legs or shoulders of a horse, it *acts as if* it knew that its larva has to develop in the horse's stomach, and that the horse, in licking itself, will convey the larva into its digestive tract. When a paralysing wasp stings its victim on just those points where the nervous centres lie, so as to render it motionless without killing it, it acts like a learned entomologist and a skilful surgeon rolled into one.' But the knowledge, if knowledge there be, is *reflected outwardly in exact movements*. It is knowledge of *objects*, whereas in the case of a human being acting intelligently there is a knowledge which depends on *making use of relations* of

like with like, of content to container, of cause to effect, &c.

(a) *The Formative Cause of Instinct*

Instinct was formed in some such manner as that by which Intellect came to be, viz. by a condensation or shrinking of consciousness, the only difference being that at some point or other in the history of evolution, psychic characteristics which were originally fused together became separated into divergent lines, one line progressing along the vertebrates till man is reached, and the other along the line of the animal kingdom till the hymenoptera are reached.

(b) *Is Intelligence degraded Instinct?*

It has been objected that this description of instinct makes it look as if nature had taken the remarkable step of stripping humanity almost bare of that innate knowledge of things which had been found most serviceable to all the animal kingdom hitherto, and which continues to be so to all but man; and also that it represents man as if he were a being who had fallen from Instinct to mere Intelligence.

(E) DURATION, CHANGE, AND TIME

'The chief feature in Professor Bergson's contribution to the philosophy of experience, which distinguishes it fundamentally from the views of

previous thinkers, is his new conception of time as "concrete time." So says *Balsillie*, one of the ablest critics of Bergson's theories. And he also notices that *Professor James Ward* claims to have anticipated Bergson in this matter. Professor Ward's words occur on page 307 of *The Realm of Ends*, where, in the course of a discussion on the relation of *Concrete Time* to the conception of *God*, he says, 'I think I may fairly claim to have anticipated him (Bergson) to some extent. In 1886 I had written a long paragraph on this topic.'

In any case the conception of 'Concrete Time' or 'Duration' is the ruling principle of Bergson's theories, and therefore it is very important to grasp its significance.

(a) *Abstract and Real Time*

The first step towards doing this is to distinguish between time as an abstraction and time as a reality.

The mental picture which we ordinarily form of time is not real time but a *picture of space*. We commonly think of time as a medium in which events take place, and in which states succeed each other. When we do so the word *time* is only another name for *space*. Kant argued that 'time' really is 'conceptual space' as opposed to 'perceptual space.' By 'conceptual space' he meant, not the space which we perceive,

but the space which we construct mentally by abstraction—the space we study in geometry and in mechanics ; whereas ‘perceptual space’ is the space our eyes and hands seem to reveal to us. Yet we have never seen or handled space except by illusion. If there were no things about us we could not perceive space. It would have no colour, no temperature, no materiality, no motion. It would be *nothing*. Space only exists ‘in the abstract.’ It is not real apart from the world of nature that exists in it. It is part of our conception of nature. Take away space from nature, or take away nature from space, and there would be nothing left. It is true that ‘space’ has *meaning* for us, and that it is a *conception* of the utmost importance to science, but it is *not an entity or a reality*. It is an *abstraction*, and it is no more possible to treat it as a reality than it is possible to roll up a man’s shadow and place it in a bag.

Thus it is with ‘time’ according to most philosophers. Time is merely space thought of in another form. It is a conception, and an all-important conception, to science ; but it is no more real than space is real. It is an *abstraction*.

On this point Bergson joins issue with all the other philosophers. The first principle of his philosophy is that Time is *not an abstraction* ; it is *not* space in another form : it is non-spatial ; it is real. In fact Reality *is* Time, and can only be expressed in terms of time. ‘There is no stuff more

resistant nor more substantial than time, it is the very stuff of which life and consciousness are made.'

(b) *Real Time*

How, then, does Bergson show us that time is real? He does so by telling us that consciousness, which is a mode of Life, is essentially time existence: that a thing that lives does so because it changes unceasingly. When it ceases to change it ceases to live. The difference between an inanimate thing and a living organism is that a thing is stable whilst an organism is stationary.

(c) *Stationary but not stable*

A *stable* thing is at rest or unchangeable in all its parts, whilst a *stationary* organism, though it seems to be unchangeable in its form, undergoes a constant change of all its parts. Professor Ostwald uses the following illustration to explain the difference. 'A brass faucet is a *stable* body, since it not only preserves its form and function permanently, but consists at all times of the same material, and shows the same peculiarities, such as stains, defects in form, &c. On the other hand the jet of water flowing from the faucet is a *stationary* body. In favourable circumstances it can assume a constant form, so that at a hasty glance it might be taken for a stable glass rod. On closer examination it will be found that the parts

of water of which it is formed are not the same at any given instant as the instant before, each part that has flowed away being replaced by another just as large following it.'¹

Concrete Time may be likened to the constant flow of water which is *stationary* but *not stable*—the flow which causes each part that has gone to be replaced by another. And, if for the sake of clearness in thought, we wish to make a distinction between 'Time' and 'Life,' we may compare Life to the pressure which is the impetus of the flow, so long as we remember that the distinction is wholly artificial, and that in reality there is no difference between Time and Life, for Life is Duration, Duration is Change, and Change is Time, and when Change and Time cease then Life ceases.

Bergson emphasizes this doctrine with a number of illustrations such as the notes of a tune melting, so to speak, into one another; and the ticks of a clock which are said to organize themselves like the notes of a tune, 'permeating each other so as to form a continuous multiplicity of a qualitative kind which has no resemblance to number.' But every illustration he uses leads to the same idea, which is that 'Time' is not merely a form of thought like 'space,' but a living force by reason of which states melt into one another and form organic wholes.

¹ Ostwald's *Natural Philosophy*, p. 163.

(F) MOVEMENT AND MATTER

If Life be flowing, unceasing movement, *what then is Matter, which seems to be lifeless, inert, and unchanging?* The answer Bergson gives is that *everything* moves, changes, and becomes. And in this statement he claims the support of recent natural science.

In the year 1900 the Master of Downing College, Cambridge, issued an *Introduction to Science*, in which occurs the following short paragraph on the 'Ultimate Constitution of Matter': 'All lines of evidence converge to support the modern view that matter is made up of molecules, each of which comprises one or more atoms which are indivisible by chemical means, although evidence has recently been adduced to show that even atoms are aggregations of vast numbers of still smaller masses.'

Since these words were written a form of chemical change called Radio-activity, which had been hitherto unknown to science, has been discovered, and it is generally assumed that the atom is not the finality it was supposed to be. Sir J. J. Thompson has given his high authority to the statement that 'matter is just a collection of positive and negative units of electricity; and the forces which hold atoms and molecules together, the properties which differentiate one kind of matter from another, all have their origin

in the electrical forces exerted by positive and negative units of electricity, grouped in different ways in the atoms of different elements.' In short, for natural science to-day, *everything is movement.*

Bergson accepts this as the foundation of his theory that *all is movement, and Movement is Life.* But the movement is not going at the same speed everywhere. In the brain of man it is going at a great speed, but in a stone it is going very slowly. Along some lines in nature the movement is inverted, or appears to be going backwards. All these movements are related, and it is the relation of our movement to other movements which makes other movements *appear* to us to be very slow, or to be at rest, or to be inverted.

H. Wildon Carr illustrates the theory by the movements of a railway train. 'When we are in a train the landscape seems to stream past us, the nearer objects at a greater speed than the more distant. When we pass another train going in the same direction, but at a slower speed, it seems to be moving in the reverse direction. If the speed is the same as ours it seems not to be moving at all. And if it is travelling in the reverse direction, it seems to be moving at twice the speed that it really is moving at. Imagine, then, life as a vast movement in being, if our particular interest draws us to attend to the direction in which part of the movement is

advancing, it may seem to us that the rest of movement is retarding the advance, or even streaming backwards. So we, alive in this great living, borne along as part of this true life, view the movement around us and see it as dead matter opposed to the very movement of which it is itself only an individual view.¹

Matter, therefore, according to Bergson, is a particular view of a movement which goes on outside ourselves and is both relative to, and slower than, the movement of life which proceeds within us.

§ 37. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LIFE

(a) *Freedom*

Life is always and everywhere *self-creative*. At every instant it is creating something new, and in those instances where it has reached the length of creating intelligent beings, those beings themselves are *free creative centres*.

It has often been said that Bergson has furnished a new argument for the freedom of the human will. ¹ But it must not be supposed that he supports the freedom of the will in the Libertarian sense, which means that it is impossible to present an adequate account of the phenomena of intelligent life that does not include the exercise of intelligent determination in the guidance of

¹ *The Philosophy of Change*, p. 30.

thought, the government of impulse, and the direction of conduct.

It is a grave mistake to imagine that Bergson's philosophy gives any support to this Libertarian doctrine of free-will. He speaks of 'free-activity' which goes on, as it were, 'in the obscure depths of our consciousness at every moment of our duration' and of a 'whole personality concentrating itself into a point, or rather a sharp edge, pressed against the future and cutting into it unceasingly.'

This really means that men are 'acted,' that is to say, used as machines. *It is Life that is free*, and in so far as men are full of Life they share in the self-creative activity of Life. But such 'free-activity' is very different from the power of choice which 'free-will' assumes in common speech. The 'free-will' which Bergson argues for is nothing more than a liberty which we share with everything that lives.

(b) *Purpose*

There are two piles upon which the entire Bergsonian system is supported. They are, *first* his principle of Duration; and, *second*, his view that Life has a practical destination. It is generally accepted amongst his interpreters that the 'vital impulse' he writes about is *purposive*.

But once again it is a serious mistake to imagine that he teaches 'purpose' *in the theological sense of the term*. Mr. Balfour has pointed out, very rightly,

that it is exceedingly doubtful whether 'purpose' can be predicated of 'Creative Evolution' in any real sense. Bergson's own words are 'Life progresses and endures in time. . . Of course when once the road has been travelled we can glance over it, mark its direction, note this in psychological terms, and speak of it as if there had been pursuit of an end. But the human spirit has nothing to say of the road which is going to be travelled. . . . The teleological interpretation, such as we shall propose it, must not be taken for an anticipation of the future. It is a vision of the past in the light of the present.'

In order to have 'purpose' in the true sense of the term, it is necessary to postulate the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, with a pre-existing plan; but no such Intelligence, and no such plan, are admitted by Bergson. Any result that may be effected is *the automatic result of a tendency*. 'Duration is the true creator of both the inner reality of consciousness and the external reality of its environment.'

Since the publication of *Creative Evolution*, it appears as though Bergson had taken a step towards the recognition of 'theological purpose' in the universe; for in the same number of the *Hibbert Journal* in which Mr. Balfour questions whether 'purpose' can be predicated of 'Creative Evolution,' Bergson writes on 'Life and Consciousness,' and says that 'conscious life is the product of a

spiritual force which draws from itself more than it contains, and gives more than it has.' 'May we not, therefore, suppose that the passage of consciousness through matter is destined to bring precision, in the form of distinct personalities, tendencies or potentialities which at first were mingled, and also to permit those personalities to test their force whilst at the same time increasing it by an effort of self-creation ?'

Thus '*spiritual-activity*' rather than '*free-activity*' comes to the front, and this *spiritual-activity* is less automatic than the '*free-activity*' he has written so much about. He recognizes that there is, or may be, a spiritual force operating in the Vital Impulse.

But this is as far as he goes in the direction of 'theological purpose'; and in the Lectures he delivered at Oxford on *The Nature of the Soul*, he appears to have reverted to the old position that creation is automatic, and that the soul makes itself.

§ 38. MANIFOLDNESS, MOBILITY, AND TORPIDITY

In creation, Bergson sees two divergent tendencies which are spoken of as 'ultimate cosmic movements.' They are complementary one to the other. One is a tendency towards immobility or an unconscious torpor, and the other is a tendency towards mobility and consciousness.

On some lines the process of development has

been arrested, and on others it has been turned back.

This is the reason why, amongst animals, we find degrees of development in instinct, and, amongst men, degrees of development in intelligence.

‘On two main lines only has life found a free way, along the line of the vertebrates, at the end of which is man, and along the line of the arthropods, at the end of which are the hymenoptera.’

§ 39. CAUTION

I believe the foregoing to be an accurate precipitate of Bergson's philosophy. This Philosophy has been welcomed as ‘a great search-light.’ The press and the pulpit have acclaimed it as a brilliant victory over materialism, the enemy of determinism, the true foundation of free-will, and the demonstration of teleology or purpose. It has been claimed both by Neo-Catholicism and by Syndicalism as a foundation and an inspiration. Its influence has given rise to eleven new reviews of Catholic Philosophy in one year; and *George Sorel*, the French philosopher-poet, has applied its principles to working-class movements, especially that movement known as Syndicalism.

But grave suspicions are beginning to take possession of the British mind that the philosophy has been pushed beyond its merits. That it is a thought-mosaic of exceeding brilliancy is admitted by all; but it is a thought-mosaic in which logic

and consistency are conspicuously absent. Even *Wildon Carr* says that it makes no appeal to men by reason of its harmony and consistency; and *David Balsillie* has demonstrated, quite fairly, that it is a tangle of inconsistencies.

Moreover, responsible scientists like Sir Ray Lankester and Hugh S. R. Elliot maintain that Bergson writes inaccurately about the structures of plants and animals; that the 'vital impulse' and the 'psychical element' which he sees in life are illusions, 'worthless and unprofitable matter, causing waste of time and confusion of thought to many of those who are induced to read them,' they are 'just the product of his own intuition, evolved, like the famous camel of the German, out of his own consciousness.'

The *Spectator* said recently that '*Christian thinkers are hanging on to Bergson's skirts.*' This may be true, but wise Christian thinkers will not hang on too tightly, lest they be dragged into regions of obscurity, out of which they will not easily emerge as *Christian thinkers*. There is a better foundation for Christian theology than Bergson's philosophy, and a more enduring.

CHAPTER VII

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SPIRIT; OR, THE NEW IDEALISM

‘THE New Idealism’ is one of the most influential forms of prevalent philosophy, and the best way to approach an understanding of it is, in the first place, to notice points of difference between the New Idealism and typical forms of ‘Old Idealism.’

§ 40. THE NEW IDEALISM MUST BE DISTINGUISHED FROM ‘ABSOLUTISM’

The typical exponents of ‘Absolutism’ known to history are *Plato* in ancient days, and *Spinoza* in modern times.

The central motive of *Platonism* was opposition to the ‘common sense’ of the multitude, combined with confidence in the superiority of well-grounded or systematic knowledge. The goal of the discussions in most of *Plato*’s dialogues was to show that the knowledge of the many, who live as if they have a wisdom of their own, has no stability, and

contains none of the unshaken heart of persuasive truth. The philosopher, in those days, was he 'who would not rest in the multiplicity of individuals which is appearance only, but will go on—the keen edge will not be blunted, neither the force of his desire abate until he have attained the knowledge of the true nature of every essence by a kindred power of soul.'¹ He will start on the discovery of the absolute by the light of reason alone, and without any assistance of sense. And if he perseveres, 'by pure intelligence, he attains at last to *the idea of the good*, and finds himself at the end of the intellectual world.' 'It is in the power of the soul to turn from things to the contemplation of ideas, till the soul is turned from generated being, till it be able to endure the contemplation of Being itself, and the most splendid of Being: that is the Good.'²

Thus, for Plato, Philosophy meant, in the first place, the assertion of 'a maximum ideal' called the Good, which was the only certainty in the universe.

The ruling thought of Spinozism was that the entire system of things is connected together in some such way as the axioms and consequents are connected in Mathematics. Under the control of this ruling idea Spinoza (1633–77) imagined the ground of things—the ground which unites all

¹ *Plato's Republic*, Everyman's Library, pp. 220 ff.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 161 ff.

the world into an intelligible order—to be some substance depending on nothing but itself. This substance he called ‘God,’ but said that it was neither external to the universe nor capable of active thought.

Thus for Spinoza philosophy meant, in the first place, the assertion of a fundamental ideal, the only ground of intelligence, the goal and the starting-point of all knowledge.

From these two examples it is clear that ‘Absolutism’ stands for ‘The assertion of a maximum or superlative ideal having metaphysical validity,’ or in less technical words, it means a system of philosophy which depends on the assertion of an ultimate and unconditioned ideal, the goal and ground of all knowledge. It may be named ‘The Good,’ ‘The Infinite Substance,’ ‘The Universal Will,’ ‘The Absolute,’ or ‘God,’ but it is nothing more than a *logical conception*, or mental tool, which is *purely speculative* in origin. It only refers to human experience in the most general way, and leaves the greater part of human history and the facts of science out of account. And even if these should be taken into account, they would be explained by means of the logical conception which is assumed.

But the *New Idealism* professes to be based on human experience as a whole, and upon the facts of natural science. Thus Professor Baillie writes, ‘We must start from the whole of experi-

ence as such ;' ¹ and Professor Bradley writes, 'Find any piece of existence, take up anything that any one could call a fact . . . and then judge if it does not consist in sentient experience.' ²

Hence the New Idealism makes its starting-point that experience which the old Absolutism neglected. It does not assert a logical conception and then try to deduce appearances from it. It seeks for a unity beneath all the variety of appearances in the world, but its initial starting-point is *the priority of the human consciousness*. It is occupied, in the first instance, with our manner of knowing things. It is essentially a theory of knowledge. It studies the functions of 'mind' and begins with the study of the mental processes of the finite mind. It does not end there, but studies those processes in order to find, if possible, 'the complete, self-sustained, significant whole.'

§ 41. THE NEW IDEALISM MUST BE DISTINGUISHED FROM 'SUBJECTIVISM'

The great exponent of 'Subjectivism' in English philosophy is *Berkeley* (1685-1753). He was the champion of the orthodoxy of his day, and the object of all his philosophizing was to destroy the influence of the materialism which was rampant. He started with an analysis of his own

¹ *Idealistic Construction of Experience*, p. 105.

² *Appearance and Reality*, p. 145.

consciousness, according to the method which had been approved by all philosophers since *Descartes* (1596–1650). He endeavoured to place himself outside his own consciousness and to report how his consciousness operated.

This was his greatest mistake, according to the New Idealism, for he did not see that to place himself outside his own consciousness, even if that could be done, was to take out of it the subject, *for whom* the order of facts to be observed was there at all.

The result of Berkeley's analysis was to the effect that all existence is the sum of the states making up the experience of the individual, and that there really is nothing existing outside of mind or consciousness. 'To be is to be perceived' was his most famous saying. His argument ran as follows:—

The music of nature is only sound, the tints of nature are only colour, but sound and colour are both sensations. So, too, is the fragrance of flowers and the breeze that plays on the face. If there were no senses there would be no sensible universe, and therefore, the sensible universe is resolvable into ideas.

Locke, who preceded Berkeley, had taught that 'matter,' or the 'stuff,' of which things are made, existed outside, and independently of, the human mind.

But, said Berkeley, all your knowledge comes

through your senses. Colour, touch, taste, scent, and sound are only sensations of the mind. If 'matter' is independent, it must, therefore, be something colourless, scentless, soundless, tasteless, and something you cannot touch. Hence you cannot know it, and *for you it is nothing*. Moreover, if it really existed, you would be no wiser, for you would have no sense by which to detect its existence.

And if we ask how colour, scent, &c., have become cemented into what appear to us to be things, Berkeley tells us that it is all the result of an 'acquired perception.' We have been so used to putting certain sensations together that they have come to *suggest* each other. When, for example, there comes through our eyes the sensation of redness, and through our noses the sensation of a certain fragrance, we straightway *imagine* the form and the texture, and all the rest of the ideas which, together with the colour and the fragrance, make up a red rose. Ideas call up each other. *Things are nothing more than compounded ideas*. Certain ideas are always associated. These have been imprinted by the Author of Nature on our senses and are called real things. Certain ideas are less constantly associated. These are excited by the imagination and are termed images of things.

Such is a brief *résumé* of Berkeley's idealism, and it is intended to illustrate the fact that it

is purely subjective, that is to say, it regards all nature as due to the consciousness, or to the thinking, of subjects who perceive.

The New Idealism does not propose to wholly reject Berkeley's Idealism, but to correct it and improve it.

It is maintained that Berkeley confused an object of knowledge with the idea of the object, and that to have knowledge, both an idea of a thing and the thing itself are necessary. Therefore things really do exist outside us, but we know them merely as objects which combine with ideas in order to make knowledge; but this knowledge can only exist in our minds and not outside them.

Moreover, the New Idealism says that Berkeley failed to recognize that the 'mind' to be observed is not any individual's mind, but universal mind—the common mind of humanity—which can be treated as an object of knowledge in the same way that things are treated.

In these two important details the New Idealism is to be distinguished from Subjectivism.

§ 42. THE SOURCE OF THE NEW IDEALISM

The origin of the New Idealism is generally traced back to *Kant* (1724–1804), although *Kant* himself was not an Idealist, and rejected the philosophy of Idealism as it was understood in his day. He set himself to the task of inquiring

into the conditions under which knowledge of anything is possible for a thinking subject, and the significance of such knowledge. After 'decades of philosophic experience, of wandering from hypothesis to hypothesis, of criticism, of resignation to the truth combined with fearless constructive research,' he came to the conclusion that there is a *physical* order of phenomena outside us, and a *psychological* order of phenomena in our minds. The Physical things have certain conditions imposed by our knowing them. Not that they must of necessity conform to these conditions, but if we are to know them, and in so far as we do know them, they must be subject to those conditions.

He expressly denied Berkeley's principle that '*To be is to be perceived.*' The essence of his arguments may be stated as follows :—

Outside you there is the raw material of knowledge. You take this raw material into the mind in the form of sensations and representations, and it is there woven, along with certain principles, into the web of knowledge; and all those principles and conditions which make the raw material into a '*knowable* world' are drawn from the mind itself. That which does the weaving is behind all experience, and you may call it 'Self,' or 'Soul,' as you please.

By such arguments Kant established three great principles :—

(a) The mind imposes conditions on external things, and by doing so *constitutes*, or builds up, all that we know.

(b) Nothing can be independent of knowledge save what lies beyond knowledge.

(c) Reality is to be found in the human being's mental states or in the 'cognitive consciousness.'

All subsequent Idealists have built on this three-fold foundation.

During the eighteenth century, Idealists were divided into two opposing camps; one camp contending that we will in order to know, and the other asserting that the will is a product of knowledge. These two camps are known as:—

(a) *Voluntarist Idealists*, the typical representative of whom is Schopenhauer.

(b) *Intellectual Idealists*, the typical representative of whom is Hegel.

In our day this controversy has become obsolete, but the Idealists are still divided into two camps which may be called (a) Critical and (b) Constructive.

§ 43. THE CRITICAL SCHOOL OF IDEALISTS

The critical school aims at a strictly logical investigation of the conditions of knowledge. Its chief representatives in England are *Professor Bradley* and *Professor Joachim*.

(a) Appearance and Reality

Bradley has issued *Appearance and Reality*, which is one of the most important philosophic works published in recent years.

The strategic positions in the argument are :—

Living elements of the universe—sensation, feeling, thought, will—must be included within one comprehensive sentience, that is to say, they are all sense-perceptions. . . . There is but one reality. . . . In this one whole all appearances come together. . . . SPIRIT is a unity of the manifold. . . . It is above the relational form, and has absorbed it in a higher unity, a whole in which there is no division between elements and laws. . . . If the unknowable were actually not knowable we could not know that such a thing existed. . . . If we had no idea of a beyond we should assuredly not know how to talk about failure or success. . . . I am so bold as to believe that we have a knowledge of the Absolute, certain and real, though I am sure that our comprehension is miserably incomplete. . . . Outside of SPIRIT there is not, and cannot be, any reality, and the more anything is spiritual so much the more is it veritably real.

Joachim's best-known work bears the title, *The Nature of Truth*, and no philosophical work has received more attention in recent years. It has

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... has been read and discussed by every serious student of philosophy in the English-speaking world.

The aim of the book is to discover a criterion of truth; that is to say, something other than truth by which we are to recognize the truth . . . *what truth in its nature is.*

No attempt is made to establish a new theory, but three typical notions of the nature of truth are examined in turn, and arguments are furnished for the conclusion that none of them can be maintained as in the end, and in all respects, successful.

First: There is *the correspondence notion* of truth. Thus, for example, to speak the truth is to speak in accordance with, or in conformity to the facts. A true man is a person whose outward acts correspond to his inner feelings. A narrative is true if it represents in essentials, and within its own sphere, the real order of events.

This correspondence notion of truth is shown to have its value, but it breaks down for two reasons if it be regarded as an adequate conception of the nature of truth.

These two reasons are highly technical, and they should be examined by the student in Professor Joachim's book.

Second: There is *the notion that truth and falsity are characteristics of propositions.* Every proposition, in itself, and in entire independence

of mind, is true or false. The truth or falsity of a proposition is, so to say, its flavour, which we must recognize, if we recognize it at all, immediately, much as we recognize the flavour of pineapple or the taste of gorgonzola. This is known as *the independence theory*. It is a theory which is applied not only to propositions but also to things.

This notion also is examined in detail by Joachim and found to be defective.

Third : There is *the coherence notion of truth*, which means that anything is true which can be conceived clearly and logically as part of an organized individual experience. It is 'the character of a significant whole,' it is 'an organized individual experience, self-fulfilling and self-fulfilled.' From this point of view truth is an ideal which can never be realized in its completeness as human knowledge. Our human experience is partial, and cannot answer precisely and completely to the ideal. Yet our partial experience, because it is partial, involves the being of 'an absolutely complete experience.'

This absolutely complete experience is the Truth, and human experience draws from it any being, and any truth, it possesses.

In Joachim's opinion this coherence notion comes nearer than the other two to a correct notion, but even in this there are serious defects and difficulties.

The final conclusion is that *Ideal Truth can*

never be the possession of a finite being. It is something we can only strive after, and so far as its nature is concerned, philosophy has a great deal yet to do before it has solved the problem.

§ 44. THE DISCOVERIES OF THE NEW IDEALISM

The foregoing comparisons of the New Idealism with the Old, along with the illustrations which have been given of Critical Idealism, are intended to show that the New Idealism, in its most critical aspect, is not futile. It serves to clear error out of the way, and also to establish foundation principles upon which new theories can be built; and a careful examination of what has already been said reveals the following principles :—

(a) The fundamental reality is not matter nor energy, but Spirit.

(b) The world of things, as it is known to men, is a thought-creation.

(c) This world of things, as it is known, becomes a thought-creation because there is Spirit in the world.

(d) The world of nature, because it is a manifestation of Spirit, is not stationary. It is dynamic, involving a process directed towards a spiritual end, an end which in human lives is manifest as self-consciousness.

(e) The natural order of things is subservient to the spiritual order.

(f) The spiritual order necessitates the existence of a universal Spirit with which human spirits are in kinship.

(g) Truth is identical with the life of the Spirit, and therefore cannot be completely grasped. The more spiritual men become, the nearer will they approach to truth, and the more intimately will they touch reality.

Guided by such principles *The Constructive School of New Idealists* aims at the discovery of the unified whole, or the One Spirit, which is at work in the depths of human experience.

§ 45. PROFESSOR EUCKEN

Of the constructive school of new Idealists *Professor Eucken* is the most influential. 'He stands before us to-day as perhaps the greatest thinker of our age, and the protagonist of a New Idealism, which satisfies our demand for moral reality as no idealistic philosophy has ever done, and as the teacher who has most fully and boldly developed the religious implications of ethical idealism. His philosophy of life is an insistence upon the supremacy of the spiritual' ¹

Eucken's works are generally arranged under the headings, historical, critical, and constructive ;

¹ E. Hermann, *Eucken and Bergson*, p. 87.

but it is not my purpose to attempt to give a *résumé* of all his works. All I desire to attempt is a brief examination of *the fundamental ideas contained in his constructive philosophy*.

Professor Gibson says that there is no reason why Professor Eucken's *magnum opus* should not still be in store for us ; but if this should prove to be correct, it is scarcely likely that the 'great work' will contain any other fundamental ideas than those which may be crystallized from—

- (a) *The Life of the Spirit.*
- (b) *Life's Basis and Life's Ideal.*
- (c) *The Truth of Religion.*
- (d) *Christianity and the New Idealism.*

These are only the English titles, and the four works are not arranged in the order of the time at which they appeared, but in the order which appears to be the best for the study of Eucken's constructive system.

{ (a) Eucken lays constant stress on the statement that his philosophy is *a philosophy of life*. That is to say, it is not simply a theory of knowledge ; it is not an intellectual analysis of the human consciousness ; it is not merely an examination of other men's theories, nor solely an elaboration of one theory more ; it is a study of human life as one great whole—intellectual, emotional, practical, social, and individual. In each and all of these aspects he sees human life to be in a state of vigorous

activity, and in constant progress; and *active life in progress is the material of his philosophy*. He says that life has organized itself in a number of world-powers, which are rooted in definite historical movements, and it is these organizations of life which form the subject of his philosophy, rather than mere systematizations of theory.

(b) Eucken's philosophy is more *Purely Speculative* than any other of our day. It has been said again and again that he pays too little attention to the facts of history, and to the psychological analysis of human experience. He has 'a characteristic distrust of psychology, largely due, no doubt, to the physiological laboratory psychology so much in vogue in Germany, and so brutally naturalistic in its general trend.' Hence his philosophy is much more speculative than it is experimental.

(c) Moreover *it is not Historical* in the sense that history is treated as a past containing a succession of events. For Eucken the past lives in the present. History is not a process in time, but a movement of the spiritual life. Just as every drop of water in a wave is a moving image of the mother sea, so every moment in time is a moving image of eternity. At every point of time, and at every point of space, he sees the same movement, which is ever a struggle towards personality, or spiritual life. For life there is no past and no future, but simply 'NOW'; no here nor there,

but simply 'HERE.' Life is raised above time; it is a gradual movement away from time; a progressive construction of a living present which transcends time. He says that Goethe has given the best expression to this *artistic aspect of history* in those well-known lines in *Faust* :—

In the currents of Life, in Action's storm,
I wander and I wave,
Everywhere I be!
Birth and the grave,
An infinite sea,
A web ever growing,
A Life ever glowing.

Thus at Time's whizzing loom I spin,
And weave the living vesture God is mantled in.¹

In treating of the life of Plato, for example, he does not write of Plato's life and writings, endeavouring to distinguish between historical fact and romantic fiction; but he treats Plato as a living and powerful influence amongst us at the present, because 'there is a particular revelation and shaping of the Spiritual Life which may be called Platonic, which was embodied in Plato's doctrines and proposals but was not exhausted in them.'

Hence, for Eucken, the subject-matter of history is at a greater depth than the facts of the world and the events of human existence. It is an eternal order of which history, as it is generally written, is an unfolding.

¹ Quoted in *The Life of the Spirit*, p. 139, from a translation by Sir T. Martin.

This statement leads us to:—

(d) *The Cardinal Principle of Eucken's Philosophy*.—He speaks of this cardinal principle as his 'constant presupposition'; and says that 'This constant presupposition is that a Spiritual Life which is a unified whole is at work in the depths of our soul.' In other words, he *always presupposes an Independent Spiritual Life, world-pervading and transcending nature and society*.

The Good, the Beautiful, and the True presuppose this world-pervading Spiritual Life, and are tendencies which, if followed, lead towards it.

This Spiritual Life surrounds men, but not as a mere environment, for it is only when men win it and make it their own that it gains a clear shape, and a definite content.

It is beyond man's complete appropriation, and independent of man's experience, and yet it is only realized through man.

It develops out of human lives into nature and into society, and cannot dispense with human lives as its medium.

'It attains in man an immediate present moment, and becomes with its infinity his own life and nature.'

'So then, but for his limitations, man would be God; and taken together with the balance of Spiritual Life which compensates for these limitations he is God.'¹

¹ Perry, *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, p. 113.

(e) It is generally taken for granted by his admirers that *The Doctrine of Personality* is Eucken's central idea; and certain Christian thinkers go so far as to assert that he saves a *true personality both in God and in Man*.

But such a statement is not true without qualification. The fact is that he binds up certain teaching about personality with his doctrine of Spiritual Life. He teaches that no true personality is possible for man without mystical union with the universal Spiritual Life; but he is very shy indeed of using the word 'God,' *because it connotes the attributes of personality*, and prefers to use the vague term 'Geistleben,' or 'Spiritual Life.' He says that what he understands by God is 'Absolute Spiritual Life in its grandeur above all the limitations of man and the world of experience—a Spiritual Life that has attained to a complete subsistence in itself, and at the same time to an encompassing of all reality.'

Professor Davison, in an article published in the *London Quarterly Review* in April 1912, suitably asks the question, 'Is the Absolute a self-conscious Spirit, or is it the impersonal Spirit in all spirits, or is it a goal towards which finite spirits endlessly strive?' Further on in the same article he says, 'We cannot help noting . . . that Eucken exhibits in his doctrine of the Absolute that fundamental and fatal vagueness which characterizes Hegel, Green, the brothers Caird, and other Idealists, when

they are describing the relation between finite spirits and that Infinite Absolute Spirit who for them is

He, They, One, All, within, without,
The Power in darkness whom we guess,

rather than the one living and true God.'

And since, in Eucken's teaching, the personality of man is inseparably interlinked with the personality of the Absolute, *the personality of man is very obscure.*

For him 'Personality' is not an attribute which belongs to every man born into the world. There is a profound gulf between the 'personalistic' and the 'individualistic' standpoints. To become a *person* a man must be rescued from the thralldom of a self-centred, self-enslaved individuality, and become a free, God-centred personality.

Eucken teaches that *the initial fact* in all personal life is 'a being for self.' His words, when condensed, are—I may know some other man. I may have an experience exactly like his. I may understand all his words and acts. I may have much sympathy with him, and even know his thoughts. And yet I do not know *him*, nor do I feel *him*. He is a little insulated circle embedded in the great All. He is an individual. And yet he may be contracted upon himself, referring everything to his individual interests, estimating everything according to the standards of pleasure and utility. He becomes a personality—a *true*

‘being for himself’—when he shares the larger life which impinges on his own, and becomes freed from the slavery of his own mean interests, caring nothing about the pleasant and the useful, but everything about the good and the true, and pursuing the highest ends regardless of the natural life. The more he shares in the larger life, the more is his personality developed, deepened, and rendered more real and private.

(f) *The Negative Movement.*

Men rise from individuality into personality by a *negative movement* in which there are three stages. It is called a *negative movement* because it is a movement against nature, and away from the sense-basis through which man is linked to nature. The three stages in the movement are :—

- (a) The stage of nature in which life is lived under the dominion of sense, expediency, and popular opinion.
- (b) The stage in which the individual has broken with the natural life of sense and convention, and come into touch with the life of the Absolute Spirit.
- (c) The stage in which the man who is newly born through contact with the Absolute Spirit, strives his best to turn the natural world into a spiritual world ; for ‘this natural system is capable of improvement. To seek to better it in the sole light of natural ideas is simply

to rivet more securely the fetters which bind us to it. What is primarily needed is not an improvement of its defects and discomforts, but a reconstitution of the whole in the light of the values of the upper level,' or the level of the spiritual life.

(g) *The Doctrine of Free-will.*

It is possible for a man to take the way of negation which leads from the lower level of individuality to the upper level of personality, because every man possesses as part of his human birthright 'a free appropriate activity,' by means of which he can get away from his individual self, and come into contact with the Absolute Spirit. This active appropriation of the Spiritual Life is what Eucken calls 'free initiative,' or 'free-will,' which he maintains to be an axiomatic fact of human nature. Before every man lies the great 'Either—Or.' 'Its significance lies in the fact that our human nature, though one in idea and aspiration, is, in actuality, twofold, being partly natural and partly spiritual. The great question, however, is not whether we shall or shall not entirely sever all connexion with the natural order. That is out of the question. Our human nature in this present dispensation is virtually bound on its lower side to this natural order, and would perish if severed from it. Nature remains, and may even show its power over us irresistibly when we

have ascetically renounced it. The alternative is a question of primacy or supremacy. A spiritual world with new values of its own, the Good, the Beautiful, the True, is also in partial possession of our divided nature, and we have to decide whether we shall bend our energies towards leaving it in full control of the whole, or whether we shall allow the natural incentives of use, comfort, and individual ambition to dominate and control the values of the spiritual realm. Until we have consciously realized the significance of this choice there can be no genuine philosophy for us. For the measure and standard of our thought is fixed by the measure and standard of our life. The primary issues are *vital*, they affect our place in the Cosmos, and the first questions in philosophy are therefore addressed not to the speculative intellect, but to our personality as a whole.' ¹

(h) *Eucken and Christian Doctrine*

Professor Gibson says that 'Eucken's philosophy is essentially a Christian philosophy of life; a re-statement and development in philosophical form of the religious teaching of Jesus.' ²

The accuracy of this statement depends on the interpretation which is given to the teaching of Jesus. To many of the doctrines of organized

¹ *Eucken's Philosophy of Life*, by Boyce Gibson, p. 86.

² *Ibid.*, p. 166.

Christianity Eucken is emphatically opposed. For example, his attitude towards Jesus of Nazareth is one of profound appreciation. He regards Him as the Teacher and Initiator of a new life, the greatest and most fruitful personality who has ever lived. He speaks of Him as a 'unique personality,' and says that 'he who makes merely a normal man of Jesus can never do justice to His greatness'; but he also says that the doctrine of two natures in the one person of Christ is untenable. 'We therefore see no more in this figure the normative and universally valid type of all human life, but merely an incomparable individuality which cannot be directly imitated. At any rate, the figure of Jesus, thus understood in all its high and pure humanity, can no longer be an object of faith and divine honour. All attempts to take shelter in a mediating position are shattered against a relentless "Either—Or." Between man and God there is no intermediate form of being for us, for we cannot sink back into the old cult of heroes. If Jesus, therefore, is not God, if Christ is not the second Person in the Trinity, then He is man, not a man like any average man among ourselves, but still man. We can, therefore, honour Him as a leader, a hero, a martyr, but we cannot directly bind ourselves to Him, or root ourselves in Him; we cannot submit to Him unconditionally. Still less can we make Him the centre of a cult. To do so from our point

of view would be nothing else than an intolerable deification of a human being.' ¹

Our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, according to Eucken, is nothing more than the brightest focus-point in the Spiritual Life which moves everywhere and always. To study Christ's ideas is to find that they exercise a sweeping power to agitate and vivify the soul. The presence of such an individuality in history can become to us a mighty impulsion and a source of new life, because He exhibits One who, though on the stage of nature like ourselves, amid the same circumstances, under the same difficulties, succeeded in breaking away from the sense-basis of human life and appropriating the spiritual. When we see an example of such supreme success in One who was bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, whose environment was similar to ours, we are inspirited to seek and to strive after the same kind of life. But this is all Jesus Christ is for us. Without reserve Eucken would accept the statement, which has been elaborated in certain quarters during recent years, that the doctrine of the Person of Christ, which runs through historical Christianity from the time of St. Paul onwards, was not due to any impression created by Jesus of Nazareth, but to the fact that certain Christological or Messianic conceptions, which were current amongst the Jews, and especially amongst the Hellenists of Alexandria,

¹ *Can We Still be Christians?* p. 36.

who for at least two hundred years before Christ had been endeavouring to blend the ideas of the Greek philosophers with the teaching of the Jewish sacred books, were transferred by such Christians as the author of the Gospel according to St. John, to the Person of Jesus.

Hence a complete revolution in traditional Christianity is necessary if we are to be Christians and to accept Eucken's philosophy as in any sense final.

Following necessarily upon his estimate of the Person of Christ, is his rejection of the Christian doctrine of the *Incarnation*, of *Redemption* through Christ, and of the *Resurrection of Christ*. He would also sweep the entire miraculous element out of the Gospels, and treat the stories of the wonderful works of Jesus as fables. And, as a necessary consequence of his conception of the Spiritual Life, he would have us think of such doctrines as the Fatherhood of God, and the Trinity, as illusions. Furthermore, as *E. Hermann* has pointed out, 'in vain do we search for a philosophical interpretation of prayer, adoration, contemplation, ecstasy of worship; throughout the whole of his work, indeed there is a taciturnity about these spiritual intimacies which verges on suspicion of them.'

Such are the bare facts about Eucken's treatment of Christian doctrine; and I cannot close this brief description of Eucken's constructive philosophy better than by paraphrasing two or

three sentences in the Article by *Dr. Davison* referred to on p. 116, because his authority on such matters is so much greater than mine.

(i) *Eucken's Great Service*

Dr. Davison says: 'Eucken has rendered good service to the cause of religion by his doctrine of the Spiritual Life in man, and his demonstration of its groundwork in the very constitution of humanity. In the life of the spirit, when rightly understood, lies the proof that a higher than human power is at work in human history, and thus in man himself are to be found the evidences of a Life and Power above man.' But he stops short in abstractions and refuses to recognize the higher power at work as a *Personal* principle of spiritual life, and the personal element in man requires a personal God. 'Religion consists in personal relations. When these are denied, or explained away, it collapses, like a breaking organism in an exhausted receiver.' He removes, or acquiesces in the removal of, the very foundations of the Christian faith of two thousand years, and puts no other foundation in its place. 'A philosopher who propounds a shadowy religion, "defecated to a transparency," as an improvement upon faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom Paul and John preached, and for whom Ignatius and Polycarp and hosts of martyrs lived and died, must be prepared not only with a doctrine which

can be analysed in the study, but one which is able to move and regenerate a world.'

Eucken's New Idealism is essentially a philosophy of religion, but it does not square with what is known as evangelical Christian doctrine. His work has great value for the modern Christian mind, but in spite of this, it is a kind of higher pantheism, similar to other systems of philosophic pantheism, which have had their day, and ceased to interest the human mind, whilst the teaching of Jesus, and the Living Lord Himself, remain the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

PART IV
PRAGMATISM

CHAPTER VIII

THE GENERAL MEANING OF PRAGMATISM AND ITS MODERN HISTORY

§ 46. THE DRIFT OF PRAGMATISM

THE most remarkable product of the conflict between Vitalism and Mechanism is the thought-movement known as 'Pragmatism.' It is a thought-movement which is very difficult to define. Professor Perry in *Present Philosophic Tendencies* says, 'It is characteristic of Pragmatism that it does not lend itself to summary definition. It can neither be identified with a fixed habit of mind, as Naturalism can be identified with the scientific habit of mind, nor can it be reduced to a single cardinal principle, as can Idealism. We are as yet too much in the midst of it to discern its general contour; indeed it is not so much a systematic doctrine as a criticism and method. Nevertheless, it is not impossible, I think, to give a preliminary characterization of it that shall be roughly true, and shall serve as a guide to the

study of its diverse aspects. . . . *It is the biocentric philosophy.*' Because it is *biocentric* the philosophies of such teachers as Bergson and Eucken may be said to be pragmatic in some aspects.

Pragmatism is not, and does not pretend to be, a system of philosophy in the strict sense of the term. A system of philosophy, properly speaking, is a formal arrangement of doctrines embodying a logical view of the universe. It is 'a picture of the great universe of God' painted by reflective thought. But it is contrary to the spirit of Pragmatism to attempt to paint a picture of the universe, or to establish any ordered body of doctrine, which is definite, final and complete. Pragmatism may be said to include within its scope four departments of mental activity:—

1. It is a polemic or critique of certain principles and methods in philosophy.

2. It is a theory of knowledge, or of the way in which knowledge comes to us.

3. It is a statement of what is meant by truth, and of how truth is to be tested. This department of Pragmatism used to be called 'Humanism,' but it is now included under the more general title, and the pragmatist's notion of truth and its guarantee is said to be humanistic.

4. It furnishes certain bases for an interpretation of life; and by life is meant not 'Ideal

Life' nor 'Absolute Life' nor 'Eternal Life,' but 'the temporal, operative life of animals and men, the life of instinct and desire, of adaptation and environment, of civilization and progress.'

An attempt will be made in the following pages to give a characterization of these four points in succession.

§ 47. MODERN THOUGHT LEADING TO PRAGMATISM

(a) A brief glance at the history of modern thought leading up to Pragmatism will be our best introduction to Pragmatism as a polemic.

One of the most notable contributions that *Kant* made to modern thought is suggested by the phrase 'Mind makes nature.' *Locke* and *Hume*, the two great teachers of philosophy who immediately preceded *Kant*, treated 'mind' as if it were the product of experience.

In *Locke's* view the mind of a child was like a piece of blank paper for the hand of experience to write upon, or it was like a dark room into which light was admitted by two small windows called Sensation and Reflection. In any case, the mind of man was wholly passive, without any power to create an idea or part of one. The world outside was the real world, and the world within was a collection of marks made on the clean paper by outside things. But how did the world of things

outside write upon the clean paper inside? In answer to this question Locke said he had critically examined both outside things and inside ideas. In natural things he found two sorts of qualities: 'primary' and 'secondary.' The primary qualities were inherent or 'stuck into' things; the secondary qualities were 'given off' in some way, and these wrote upon men's minds by means of their senses. The roundness and size of an orange, for instance, were inherent; the colour, taste, and smell were given off, and by affecting men's senses made impressions on their minds. The given-off qualities were not inherent in things, but unless things were real they could not be given off. In the mind he found two sorts of ideas—simple and complex. The simple ideas were *written on* the mind, like words written on notepaper, but the complex ideas were *worked into* the mind like the watermarks worked into notepaper. The working in was done by the act of reflection, or by thinking over and over again the same sensations until they came to be always associated together. These two, 'perception and reflection, are the fountains of knowledge, from which all the ideas we have, or naturally can have, do spring.'

Hume's '*Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding*' was more thorough than Locke's Essay. Hume's argument was that seeing, smelling, tasting, and hearing are impressions. Remembering such sensations, and anticipating others like them, are

ideas. The mind has no other knowledge. On some ideas, such as 'quantity,' 'number,' 'cause and effect,' 'the uniformity of nature,' the mind can reason, but even these ideas are only blurred impressions of sense. 'If,' said he, 'we hold to the facts of experience, we shall have to confess that the only thing we can rest on is a string of sensations, some of them single, and some of them constant,' the conclusion being that experience is all that we know. Experience must depend for its existence on certain assumptions, and these assumptions are derived from experience. The idea of 'self' is an illusion. Men are bundles of perceptions and reflections, which succeed each other with great rapidity, and in a constant current. 'You cannot say that any one of these is self. You have an impression now, and a different one in another minute, and then a third and a fourth, and so on without number. Neither of these is *you*, there is no *you*—*you* are only a bundle of impressions and ideas, to which the name experience is given.'

It was evident to the philosophers who succeeded Hume that these conclusions not only logically dissolved the foundations of mathematics and physics, but also *logically* destroyed the existence of the soul. Such conclusions meant 'the death of philosophy.'

This 'death of philosophy' is said to have roused *Kant* from dogmatic slumber, and after

years of philosophic experience and inquiry, he came to the conclusion that the human mind might not only be likened to a reflecting *mirror*, or a collection of compound ideas, but it might be likened also to a *factory*, driven by a great inherent force, and constructing out of the images of outside things an ideal world which for each man is the only real world.

Kant found that the principles or laws upon which all science rests are not mere sensuous experiences, either primary or derivative, but the products of 'mind' working on its own account; that nothing can enter the mind without taking on a certain form; that it is possible for us to say with certainty that everything in the past or the future must have just that form and no other; that the 'constructive imagination' lays hold on the facts of sense and the ideas of reflection, and builds them up into an ideal world; that the force in 'mind' which does this is will power, which springs up from the hidden depths of the soul; and that the exercise of the will in the direction of the good is a surer road to truth or reality than the exercise of pure reason. He distinguished between two kinds of reason, the pure and the practical; and taught that practical reason depends on the exercise of goodwill, and is a sure road to truth.

This *primacy of the practical reason* was the source of 'Voluntarism,' a doctrine developed

by Schopenhauer in *The World as Will and Idea*.

It is of the utmost importance for the student of Pragmatism to grasp the foregoing points in Kant, for in one or other of them is to be found the beginning not only of Pragmatism, but of each of the forms of thought to which it is opposed; in fact, it may be safely said that *all* the streams of modern thought converge in Kant.

The element in his philosophy indicated by the phrase '*Mind makes Nature*' was elaborated by the famous school of Neo-Kantians who acknowledged *T. H. Green* as their Master. They developed it as a protest against the *Darwinians*, who suggested that certain difficulties which had been pointed out in the statements of *Locke* and *Hume* might be got over by supposing that the 'complex or derivative' shadows on the mirror of the mind were accumulated results inherited from a long line of ancestors. The Neo-Kantians argued that certain elements in the mind were unintelligible, unless a *permanent unity* in the operations were presupposed. They said that *Locke* and *Hume* had forgotten the *unity* of all the impressions and reflections, and that this unity indicated the existence of a power to remember them, to combine them, to group and regroup them, and to estimate their strength and value.

This power, they said, is *consciousness*, and this consciousness is, fundamentally, one with '*the*

eternal consciousness.' It is this eternal consciousness which constructs the world; that is to say, it constructs what it knows, constructs *the whole* of objective reality; and the individual human consciousness is a finite representation of the eternal consciousness, constructing a little world in the same way that the eternal consciousness constructs the whole. Therefore, instead of the 'unity of consciousness' being derived from a long line of rational and irrational ancestors, it is God-given, and a part of God.

The Pragmatists were dissatisfied with this conclusion, and going back to Kant they found a fresh starting-point in what he had taught about the primacy of the practical reason, and the value of the goodwill. They linked themselves on to his 'Voluntarism,' and developed it in a form different from Schopenhauer's. They taught that so far as any man acts according to the dictates of the practical reason, and has a good will, he approaches whatever great absolute reality there may be.

Thus the essence of their doctrine may be summed up in the two admonitions:—

- (a) Act right, and in doing so you will find all the truth you can know.
- (b) Test all supposed truth by trying whether it produces good effects or not.

§ 48. HISTORY OF THE IDEA ACCORDING TO PROFESSOR JAMES

So far as the history of the term is concerned, we are obliged to turn to the late Professor James. In *Pragmatism* he says: 'The term is derived from the same Greek word, *πράγμα*, meaning action, from which our words "practice" and "practical" come. It was first introduced into philosophy by Mr. Charles Pierce in 1878. In an article, entitled "How to Make Our Ideas Clear," in the *Popular Science Monthly* for January of that year, Mr. Pierce, after pointing out that our beliefs are really rules for action, said that to develop a thought's meaning we need only determine what conduct it is fitted to produce: that conduct is for us its sole significance. And the tangible fact at the root of all our thought-distinctions, however subtle, is that there is no one of them so fine as to consist in anything but a possible difference of practice. To attain perfect clearness in our thoughts of an object, then, we need only consider what effects of a practical kind the object may involve—what sensations we are to expect from it, and what reactions we must prepare. Our conception of these effects, whether immediate or remote, is then for us the whole of our conception of an object, so far as that conception has positive significance at all.'

'This is the principle of Pierce, the principle of

Pragmatism. It lay entirely unnoticed by any one for twenty years, until I, in an address before Professor Howison's Philosophical Union at the University of California, brought it forward again, and made a special application of it to religion. By that date (1898) the times seemed ready for its reception. The word "*Pragmatism*" spread, and at present it fairly spots the pages of the philosophic journals.'

On p. 50, James says: 'There is nothing new in the pragmatic method. Socrates was an adept at it. Aristotle used it methodically. Locke, Berkeley, and Hume made momentous contributions to truth by its means. . . . But these forerunners used it in fragments: they were a prelude only. Not until our time has it generalized itself, become conscious of a universal mission, pretended to a conquering destiny.'

But in the matter of originality Professor James seems to have underrated himself and his fellow Pragmatists. Only one small fragment of the pragmatic method appears to have been used by any of their predecessors, namely 'The Trying of Hypotheses,' and that fragment was used in a most imperfect fashion, and then only for negative purposes; whereas the Pragmatic method used by Professor James and his contemporaries is a somewhat complicated piece of mental machinery, and it is used not merely for negative, but for constructive purposes. This will be demonstrated in Chapter X.

CHAPTER IX

PRAGMATISM AS A POLEMIC

§ 49. A CRITIQUE OF IDEALISM

IT has been indicated in the last chapter that Pragmatism had its immediate origin in a protest against the Post-Kantian Idealism which was prevalent during the last few years of the nineteenth century and the first few years of the twentieth. The central idea of this Idealism was that a superpersonal, or impersonal, consciousness, endowed with all the attributes of logic—one absolute reality—underlay all the diversity in the universe, and united all into a cosmos, or intelligible order. Professor James says that in one or other of the following terms: 'One Life, One Love, One Principle, One Good, One God,' is to be found the first article of the Idealist's faith. The Idealist seeks for the key to the enigma of the universe in some power-bringing word or name. 'That word names the universe's principle, and to possess it is, after a fashion, to possess the universe itself.' In one word or another Idealism

'has found the secret of the logical unity of the world.'¹

But Pragmatism says that the logical unity of the world is an abstraction that has no practical value, and therefore does not matter. Ideals are not rejected, nor does Pragmatism deny that ideals like 'Liberty,' 'Faith,' 'Justice,' have inspired men, lifted them above themselves and their circumstances, carried them over difficulties and obstacles, enlarged their capacities and determined their destinies. Professor James himself says that 'Ideals have been proved to be the best instruments of vengeance on tyranny, and the surest protectors of mankind.' Neither do Pragmatists offer any objection to the idea of 'God' so long as it is understood that its value is purely emotional. 'On pragmatic principles, if the hypothesis of God works satisfactorily in the widest sense of the word, it is true.'

What Pragmatism says in opposition to Post-Kantian Idealism is that, no matter by what name it is called, the faith in the ideals which it glorifies is not a faith leading to the gradual amelioration of human life, but rather a belief in ideals which stand for the perfection which was from the beginning and is for evermore. Whereas 'the faith which is most characteristic of Pragmatism is the faith in what an enlightened and solidified mankind may achieve, despite the real resistance and

¹ See *Pragmatism*, p. 51.

incompetence which retard it, the faith which is most characteristic of Idealism is the faith that all things work together for the glory of an eternal spiritual life, despite appearances.' ¹

Pragmatism also opposes the following aspects of Idealism :—

(a) The Idealist's assumption that there are truths independent of experience, which Pragmatism says cannot be proved.

(b) The fact that Idealism invests thought with a unifying power, concerning which Pragmatism says it gives no intelligible account.

(c) The 'solipsism' or 'subjectivism' with which Idealism is apt to be beset.

(d) The fact that Idealism treats 'Time' and 'Space' as appearances covering reality, whereas Pragmatism says that they are forms of reality itself.

§ 50. A CRITIQUE OF NATURALISM

A description of *Naturalism* is given in Part II, and in this place it is only necessary to say that Pragmatism is not opposed to Naturalism as a whole. It may, in a sense, be spoken of as 'naturalistic,' for it identifies reality with this world, with all that is going on in the world here and now ; it also regards perception as the most reliable instrument of knowledge, and these are characteristic traits of Naturalism.

¹ Perry, *Present Philosophic Tendencies*, p. 188.

But Pragmatism is opposed to that principle of Naturalism which implies that all the forces of life may be described in terms of energy and force, of physics and chemistry. It is 'the *bio-centric* philosophy,' and argues that energy and force, and the properties of chemical elements, are instruments which serve the uses of life. It also contends that all laws are only 'approximations and expressions of human arbitrariness.' 'They are only a man-made language, a conceptual shorthand . . . in which we write our reports of nature.'

§ 51. A CRITIQUE OF INTELLECTUALISM

It has often been stated that the issue between Pragmatism and Intellectualism lies in the answer to the question whether knowing is a kind of willing, or willing is a kind of knowing. *T. H. Green* would identify willing with thinking and feeling. For example, he says: 'Will is the capacity in a man of being determined to action by the idea of a possible satisfaction to himself. An act of will is an act so determined.'¹ 'The will is simply the man. . . . It is no separate faculty co-ordinate with other faculties. . . . Any act of will is the expression of the man as he is at the time. The motive issuing in his act, the object of his will, the idea which, for the time, he sets himself to realize, are but the same thing in

¹ *Green's Works*, Vol. ii, p. 337.

different words. . . . It is only the feeling, thought, and desire, represented by action.'¹

On the other hand, Pragmatists make much of the Will, and it would seem at first sight as if they treated Will as *the* faculty determining all others. They are true successors of the *Voluntarists*, and if the Idealists would be content to modify Green's words so as to make them mean that man with all his thoughts, feelings, desires, &c., is a little centre of the Universal Will, and that Will is identical not with self-determined character but with '*Life*'—if Idealists would accept such an interpretation of Green's words, Pragmatists would have no dispute with them on this point.

§ 52. THE REAL ISSUE OF THE CONTROVERSY

The real issue of the controversy between Intellectualism and Pragmatism lies in the question whether the intellect in human nature is the only source of knowledge, or whether it requires to be supplemented and assisted by instinct and intuition. The Intellectualist insists that the only way of knowing the things that are outside us is by the exercise of reflective thought, and also that things are identical with what we know of them; whilst the Pragmatist insists that knowledge is far wider than mere intellection.

R. L. Stevenson wrote in *The Inland Voyage*

¹ *Prolegomena*, § 153.

long before modern Pragmatism was heard of: 'It is not at all a strong thing to put one's reliance upon logic, and our own logic particularly, for it is generally wrong. . . . There is an upright stock in a man's own heart that is trustier than any syllogism; and the eyes and the sympathies and appetites know a thing or two that has never yet been stated in controversy. Reasons are plentiful as blackberries, and, like fisticuffs, they serve impartially with all sides. Doctrines do not stand or fall by their proofs, and are only logical in so far as they are cleverly put.' R. L. Stevenson was an unconscious pragmatist when he wrote these words.

The chief contentions Pragmatism has with Intellectualism may be summed up in the following statements:—

(a) There is a kind of knowledge which is non-intellectual or non-reflective. The intellect is a nucleus which has been 'formed out of the rest of knowledge by condensation, and the whole must be used, the fluid as well as the more condensed, in order to grasp the inner movement of life. Indeed, if the fringe exists, however delicate and indistinct, it should have more importance for philosophy than the bright nucleus it surrounds.'¹

This is the contention of Pragmatism

¹ James, *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 246.

whereas Intellectualism says that there is no knowledge save that which comes through the intellect and can be expressed in terms of the intellect.

(b) Pragmatism says that the function of the intellect is to select and not to create, it discovers ideas but does not generate them. 'Intellect is an organ, not of fabrication, but of discernment, a power men have to single out the most fugitive elements of what passes before them.'¹

On the other hand, Intellectualism maintains that the intellect is formed to work on matter without which is constantly changing its state, and to 'abstract' from it a world of ideas which is fixed and real.

(c) Pragmatism says that the abstracted ideas of the intellect are only *very partial* so far as reality is concerned.

On the other hand Intellectualism says that the intellect conceives a phenomenon, it abstracts from it a concept, it gives that concept a name, and reduces 'the originally rich phenomenon to the naked suggestion of that name abstractly taken, treating it as a case of nothing but that concept, and acting as if all the other characters from out of which the concept is abstracted were expunged.'²

¹ James, *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 52.

² James, *Meaning of Truth*, p. 249.

§ 53. PRAGMATISM AND FREE-WILL

Pragmatism has been eagerly welcomed as the most satisfying defence of 'free-will,' but Pragmatists make no pretence to establish 'free-will' in the theological sense. Their doctrine is 'indeterminism.' Some of them use the word 'determinist' to indicate the doctrine about the will to which they are opposed, but in point of fact they join issue with *the old necessitarianism*, which referred all actions to external forces. They have little to say in criticism of those modern determinists who are content to describe human action as the play of internal forces responsive to the action of environment, and who find an explanation of 'willing' in internal incentives as well as outward circumstances.

They cling to the doctrine of 'free agency' because it is a doctrine of *promise* and *relief*. It offers 'a world with a chance in it of being altogether good'; a possibility of dropping evil altogether, 'throwing it overboard and getting beyond it, helping the universe to forget its very place and name.'¹

"Free-will" pragmatically means novelties in the world, the right to expect that in its deepest elements, as well as in its surface phenomena, the future may not identically repeat and imitate the past.' It is 'a melioristic doctrine. It holds up

¹ James, *The Will to Believe*, p. 178.

improvement as at least possible ; whereas determinism assures us that our whole notion of possibility is born of human ignorance, and that necessity and impossibility between them rule the destinies of the world. Free-will is thus a general cosmological theory of promise just like the Absolute, God, Spirit, or Design.¹

Thus it is that whilst the Idealists hold 'Free-will' to be an indispensable condition of human character, and true in the nature of things, Pragmatists hold that it is merely a doctrine formulated by the human intellect, and that it is true for human reasons, because it holds out the promise of improvement.

¹ *Pragmatism*, p. 118.

CHAPTER X

THE PRAGMATIC THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

§ 54. THE ESSENCE OF PRAGMATISM

FIRST and foremost, Pragmatism is a 'theory of knowledge.' But the word *knowledge* has more than one signification. It may mean the sum of what is known, or it may indicate the range of some person's information, or it may denote *the familiarity that is gained by experience*.

It is upon the last signification of the word that the Pragmatist fixes attention, to the exclusion of all others. 'With Pragmatists knowledge means knowing—a complex event involving the individual knower, a something to be known, certain means of knowing it, and then, finally, the cognitive achievement or failure.'

Pragmatists are also agreed that the *form* of knowledge of which they give an account, is '*practical*.' But the word 'practical' needs careful attention. It is used, not so much to emphasize the distinction between 'theoretical' and 'practical' knowledge, but to indicate that all know-

ledge, which is true knowledge, whether it be theoretical or practical, is a *phase of life*. For knowledge is always active, it has a meaning, it is an enterprise. Whether it comes through observation or reflection, or intuition, it always works, it always does something.

Pragmatists agree on three points in reference to knowledge :—

(a) That knowledge is the familiarity gained by experience.

(b) That all knowledge should be treated as a phase of life.

(c) That the form in which knowledge manifests itself is practical.

§ 55. DIFFERENCES AMONG PRAGMATISTS

But different accounts of the range of knowledge are given by Pragmatists. Some would reserve the term 'knowledge' for that part of life which is intellectualized, and they speak of knowing as a mode of experiencing, or as the way in which things are experienced when they are experienced as known things. They would not admit that the acquaintance with life which comes through the 'delicate and indistinct fringe' of consciousness is knowledge at all. They contend that there must be an element of reflection or mediation in all cases of true knowledge.

Others insist that knowledge is both logical

and *psychological*. They say there is a species of true knowledge which is non-intellectual; that intellectual knowledge is surrounded and corrected by intuitive or immediate knowledge. They distinguish between a 'knowledge *about* things which only touches the surface of reality, and a living and sympathetic acquaintance *with* things that amounts to a direct experience of reality, an experience not merely of things as they are known, but of things as they really are, which amounts to a revelation of their nature.' This experience furnishes the light by which the philosopher sees his own intellect at work, and knows that it is a special limitation of the mind which enables him to view the reality outside himself, but which at the same time limits both the extent and the character of the view the mind takes.

But whatever differences there may be amongst Pragmatists as to the account they may give of the range of knowledge, there are certain governing principles upon which they are all agreed.

§ 56. PRINCIPLES COMMON TO ALL PRAGMATISTS

The governing principles which are common to Pragmatists may be described in the following propositions :—

- (a) Experience is much wider than intellect. Sensations or 'feelings of life' are direct

and comprehensive. They are 'the mother-earth, the anchorage, the stable rock, the first and last limits of the mind.'

(b) The 'feeling we have,' that is to say, our sensations and intuitions, provides us with a more profound way of touching reality than the intellect does. Intellectual knowledge is 'knowledge for a purpose,' a knowledge limited by a governing motive. The full extent and native quality of reality is only to be apprehended by an immediate process such as the sensation or feeling of life.

(c) The function of the intellect is to condense vague feelings of life into ideas for practical purposes.

Taking these propositions for granted as ruling thoughts, the Pragmatist proceeds to analyse the way in which the intellect is formed out of experience, and to discuss the nature and the function of ideas.

§ 57. THE FORMATION OF IDEAS OR CONCEPTS

The process by which a concept or idea is formed is said to be *a process of condensation*.

In order to have an idea or a concept there must be (a) a knower with the powers of abstraction and of memory, and (b) an objective fact. Every child, for example, is a *knower*, and outside it there is *a world of things* to be known; and as the mind of the child awakens, the world of

things seems a chaos consisting of mere individual experiences. The only connexion between them is that they follow each other consecutively. Of these experiences certain parts come to be distinguished by the fact that they are repeated more frequently, and therefore receive a special character, viz., that of being familiar.

This familiarity is due to a former similar experience being recalled. The cause of this recalling is the power of memory, which is the basis of all mental life, and is a quality common to all living things, but not found in inorganic nature.

But these succeeding experiences are only *similar*; they are not identical. They coincide at certain points only. These coinciding points depend on what points are selected for attention, and what points are eliminated by the subject of experience.

This process of selection and elimination is called '*abstraction*,' and the resultant of the process is a *concept* or an *idea*.

According to the Pragmatist *the human mind is a bundle of concepts formed in the way just described*.

§ 58. THE SUBJECTIVE ELEMENT IN CONCEPTS

But, says the Pragmatist, every concept is an individual's concept, and it has a *subjective content*. Its formation depends on an individual's power of selection, attention, and memory, and these may

refer to different parts of the same experience in different individuals. Concepts, therefore, always have a subjective element dependent on the individual. But this subjective element does not consist in the addition by the individual of new parts not found in the experience, but, on the contrary, in the *different choice* out of what is found in an experience.

Hence one of the great tasks of philosophy is to distinguish between the subjective element and the objective reality in an experience; whilst the task of science is to collect as many subjective experiences of the same objects as possible so as to fill in the gaps left in each individual's experience of the same objective reality; and so to render our knowledge of objects as complete as possible.

§ 59. THE FUNCTION OF CONCEPTS

As a general rule the Pragmatist uses the words 'concept' and 'idea' as meaning the same thing, and he says that an idea *is* what an idea *does*. It is an instrument to which attaches an office. It owes its existence and form to its use. Ideas are 'plans of action,' or

(a) '*Practical substitutes for Immediacy*'

For illustration: As I write there lies in front of me an open field with the sun shining upon the green grass. My dog is lying not far away from

me. If I utter the word 'walk' he will spring up and expect me to put on my hat and go for a walk, and if I were to follow up the idea which is represented by the word 'walk,' the idea would take me out into the green field and the sunshine. I may have the idea without executing it, or I may be prevented by my duty from going, but the idea itself makes me *feel like going*. Professor James compares such an idea to a railway ticket which will take you to a distant place, though you should never make the journey, and also to a banknote which has cash value though it should never be changed into cash; and he tells us that ideas, like banknotes, are negotiable — they may themselves be used in place of currency for purposes of reasoning and communication.

(b) '*Instruments of Reconstruction*'

But an idea is more than a 'plan of action.' It is also an '*instrument of reconstruction*.' It enables us to *re-present* our experiences of facts.

For illustration : A certain schoolboy is reported to have told one of his schoolfellows that the art of drawing consisted in thinking about an object and then drawing a line round your 'think' so as to keep it. That boy was an unconscious Pragmatist; for Pragmatism teaches that one of the main functions of ideas is to enable us to make ideal substitutes for things, that may serve as well as the things themselves. Occasionally these

ideal-substitutes will serve our purposes better than the things themselves, for they will always be at hand, their bulk will be small, and their meaning for us will be great.

Is there an Agent who makes Concepts?

One of the points at issue amongst Pragmatists lies in the question whether the subjective element in concepts is merely a passive product or whether there is an agent in consciousness, a Self, which either selects or discovers—whether there be ‘an artificer’ in consciousness, or whether intellect is the passive result of an unconscious adaptation.

Some say that in the structure of our intellect there is something which is formed to act on matter without—a *force*, or an *agent*, which deliberately chooses the points of agreement in similar experiences, and, by means of the resultant concepts, turns matter into organs or instruments of action.

Others deny that there is an agent in or behind the intellect which either selects or discovers. They say that nature has logical, mathematical, aesthetical, ethical and other properties, and by acting on consciousness produces the various concepts; that there is nothing either in or behind intellect which is creative, or which chooses with deliberation, and that Naturalism is right when it says that all ideas are produced automatically by environment.

CHAPTER XI

THE PRAGMATIC TEST OF TRUTH

THE main logical consequence of the Pragmatic 'theory of knowledge' is a conception of truth and its guarantee.

As with the terms 'knowledge' and 'practical,' we must first seek a clear notion of the limits set on the word 'truth' as the first step towards understanding the general position.

'Truth' does not mean for a Pragmatist what it means for Professor Joachim in *The Nature of Truth*. It is much more limited in scope and significance.

§ 60. LIMITATIONS OF 'TRUTH'

The Pragmatist limits the meaning of 'truth' to the truth which can be reached and understood by human beings. He does not recognize any truth beyond that. Of course, he does not say that human beings, under the present conditions of mortal life, can attain to all the truth there is, but he does say that for practical purposes it is best to limit the meaning of truth to the truth of the knowledge possessed by man.

§ 61. TRUTH A QUALITY OF IDEAS

Having limited the meaning of the word, the Pragmatist says that truth is *a quality of human ideas*, just as, for example, redness may be the quality of a rose, or greenness the quality of a tree.

To put the matter in another way: A man's ideas are the modes in which he thinks. The mode in which he thinks, at any given time, may be right or it may be wrong, it may be false or it may be true, his ideas may be good or they may be bad ones.

But in saying this it is not meant that the terms 'right and wrong,' 'true and false,' 'good and bad' have any *moral* significance, in the sense in which morality is generally understood. The significance of the terms is wholly 'utilitarian.'

When we say a thing is *good*, we mean that it is *good for something*—for some purpose or use. The piece of wood which forms a table is *good for the use to which it is put*. A clock is a *good* clock because it keeps correct time. A horse is a *good* horse in proportion as it is fitted to do the kind of service that is required of it. Even a wild beast—a lion or a tiger—is *good* for the kind of life for which it is fitted by nature.

When a mechanic brings a tool or a wheel or a frame or a foundation into the exact form or position required in order that it may serve the

purpose for which it is made, we say that he makes *true* the tool or wheel or frame or foundation.

When men bring a boat or a car into a vertical position, which is the only position in which either can serve its purpose, we say they have *righted* the boat or *righted* the car.

It is in such sense and with like significance that all Pragmatists use the terms 'right,' 'good,' 'true.' The opposite terms 'wrong,' 'false,' 'bad,' are applied to ideas when they fail in the purpose for which they arise.

What the Pragmatists mean by 'truth,' therefore, is *the effectiveness of an idea*. Truth for us, our human truth, is that quality in an idea which operates so as to make a real difference to us and shows itself in resultant effects. It is that about an idea which releases will-power in us, sets free and expands our effective power in life and over life; it is that about an idea which causes it to fit our whole active experience, increases our efficiency, carries forward our entire development and satisfies our manhood; it is that quality of an idea in virtue of which it performs what is required of it.

Some of the words of the late Professor James are as follows :—

'Truth is a property of certain of our ideas.'

'True ideas are those which we can assimilate, validate, corroborate, and verify; false ideas are

those we cannot. Truth *happens* to an idea. It becomes true, is made true by events.'

'Truth for us is simply a collective name for verification processes, just as health, wealth, strength, &c., are names for other processes connected with life, and also pursued because it pays to pursue them. Truth is made, just as health, wealth, and strength are made, in the course of experience.'

§ 62. FOUR PRAGMATIC TESTS OF TRUTH

Four Pragmatic tests of truth are to be traced in these quotations:—

(a) *The test of meaning.* An idea is true if it *calls up the feeling* of something, or if be the means of *re-presenting* something. In more technical language, an idea is true if it be either 'a practical substitute for immediacy' or 'an instrument of reconstruction.'

For example: It is a hot day in summer, but if I write down the word 'cold' the idea of 'cold' is in my mind, and the idea is so 'connected with a temperature quality' that were I to follow up the idea, I should, in some measure, have a sense of coldness. Therefore my idea of 'cold' is a true idea because it is, in some measure, a substitute for the 'cold' of experience.

Or suppose that as I write, the idea represented by the word 'holiday' enters my mind: At once I begin to reconstruct some scene in which I

have spent a holiday ; and my idea is a true one, because it, in a sense, transports me to that scene. It is not true because it is a copy or picture of the scene in its details, for in all probability my mental picture does not accurately represent the actual scene in any one particular. But it is true because for the time being it enables me to live in the scene I have imagined. It 'reconstructs' part of my holiday for me, and in proportion as it enables me to live that holiday over again, and not in proportion as it is a replica of the actual scenes, is it true.

(b) *The test of 'coherence' or 'consistency.'* Any idea is true because, and in so far as, it can be conceived. But 'to conceive' is not merely to form a mental picture. *Professor Joachim* has pointed out that, in the sense of forming a mental picture, it is impossible to 'conceive' the Antipodes, for we cannot imagine men walking head downwards, and it is equally impossible to 'conceive' a Centaur or a horse with the head and shoulders of a man.

To 'conceive,' in the sense in which the word is used in Pragmatism, is to think of something so that it can be fitted into our experience as one whole.

In this sense a Centaur is *inconceivable*, for the idea of a horse-man clashes with other ideas in our minds which have been gained by experience. We cannot adjust the idea of a creature which

is half man and half horse to our experience of nature. If it is to be actual, the animal kingdom must be its home. But we cannot place it among our ideas of the animal kingdom without confusion and contradiction. On the other hand, the idea of 'Antipodes' is conceivable, in fact it is necessary to the other ideas about astronomy, which have come into our minds through some kind of experience, and form an organized whole. It fits in with what we have learned about the earth and the solar system, and it is forced upon us whenever we think about geography or about the planets.

In other words 'Antipodes' is *coherent* and *consistent* with other ideas in our minds, and it is necessary to make them so; whilst the idea of 'Centaur' introduces confusion and contradiction into our ideas. Therefore, according to the test of 'coherence and consistency,' the idea of 'Antipodes' is *true*, and the idea of 'Centaur' is *false*.

(c) *The test of 'subsequent utility.'* Any idea, doctrine, or opinion is true *if the consequences which follow from holding it are helpful and satisfactory to a human being's life.*

For example: Suppose that in my vocation as a preacher I desire to prove the truth of the doctrine of '*Particular Providence*,' it would be quite impossible for me to do so either by logic or example. I should have to base the doctrine on my own interpretation of certain passages in

Holy Scripture, which would be a most unsatisfactory foundation ; or I might show that, judged by the Pragmatic test of 'subsequent utility,' the Scripture doctrine of a 'Particular Providence' is a plenteous fountain of practical efficiency. For if a man holds fast by the idea, it reacts upon his talents and faculties in such a way as to invest them *for him* with inestimable value, because he will then look upon his talents and faculties as the gifts of God to *himself*, tokens of love and trust to be treasured and used for God's purposes.

The idea will also react upon his opportunities, circumstances, and work, so that *for him* any lowly occupation will appear to be important. It is the effect of holding fast by this idea, or doctrine, that is described in the well-known lines from George Eliot's drama *Stradivarius*, where 'Stradivarius' is made to reply to the Monk *Naldo*, who has said that it is 'a petty kind of fame that comes of making violins' :

God were at fault for violins :
If my hand slacked
I should rob God,
Who alone is fullest good.
He could not make Antonio Stradivari's violins
Without Antonio.

Thus, because it satisfies the *Pragmatic test*, which asks for good effects on the mind, character,

and work of the man who has the idea, or holds fast the doctrine, and also because for the man himself its effects are beneficial and satisfactory, *for that man* the statement that he is sent into the world by its Almighty Ruler for definite work which no one else in the world can possibly do is *true*, whatever may be said against it by other men who do not hold it.

(d) *The test of 'General Utility.'* Such an idea as that just indicated is only true for the man who holds it, who finds that it is pleasant for him to do so, and that it stimulates him to higher efforts. 'But there are some ideas which apply to all the purposes of life, both individual and social, which are useful for the perfect harmony of our whole life, which forms our final aspiration.'¹

For example: Although it is impossible to define such ideas as '*liberty*' and '*justice*,' they are true ideas because they work well for the needs of *mankind*, and because they continue to stimulate men in masses throughout the generations.

These four, then, are the chief tests of 'truth' according to the Pragmatists:—

- (a) Meaning,
- (b) Coherence and consistency,
- (c) Subsequent utility,
- (d) General utility.

¹ F. C. Schiller, *Humanism*, p. 61.

§ 63. CRITICISMS OF THE THEORY

The Pragmatist theory and guarantees of truth are severely criticized by a large and important body of responsible thinkers.

Purely as a 'method of thinking' and 'a form of argument' the theory has great value, but as a doctrine of 'Truth' it is inadequate and extremely faulty.

'It is really not a new doctrine of truth, but a denial of truth.'

The conviction that 'truth' is more than a quality of our ideas; that it *is* rather than that it *happens*; that it is to be *discovered* rather than *made*, is far too deeply seated in the human mind, and has too long a history, to be so easily overthrown. Ages ago man 'conceived' the existence of an Absolute, a Perfect, an Ultimate, an Ideal Truth. He conceived it in the pragmatic sense of the term 'to conceive,' therefore he can never cease to search for that 'Truth,' and he can never regard it as identical with any quality of his own ideas.

Furthermore, it has been pointed out, particularly by *Professor Ladd*, that the term 'practical,' by which all truth is tested in one way or another, covers not only such ideas as 'satisfactory,' 'useful,' 'pleasant,' 'stimulating,' but a great deal more. It means anything that any man may think, or feel, or say, or do. It covers habit, custom,

exercise in art, handicraft, professional work, business, or anything that is reducible to use in common life. Hence the questions must inevitably occur: 'Practical or useful *for whom?* Practical or useful *for what purpose?* Is the satisfaction *really good or bad?*' And taken altogether, say the critics, the tests of truth are uncertain, indefinite, and lead nowhere in the serious search for truth.

In so far as the Pragmatist's doctrine of truth means that men's ideas of truth are not static or unchanging, but develop and change as their faculties unfold and their experience of life increases, it is older than history can tell us. In that sense it is a doctrine contained in such a word of Holy Writ as 'He that doeth the will of God shall know of the doctrine.'

From a Christian theologian's point of view, the Pragmatist's tests of truth appear to make the mistake of identifying truth with men's ideas of it, and, therefore, the theologian who follows the pragmatic method runs the risk of committing such grave errors as making God dependent on men's thoughts of Him.

It is more correct, from the theologian's standpoint, to say that through his experience, which is both imperfect and progressive, man gradually learns to have true ideas about the ultimate 'Truth' which is one with God, who is not only within us but above us, and for ever beyond all our knowledge and all our thought.

There is truth transcending far
The way of scientific thought,
Which travels to the farthest star
And verges on the smallest mote.¹

And the same may be said of the pragmatic
thought which we have been passing under review.

¹ *Walter Smith.*

PART V
PLURALISM

CHAPTER XII

PRAGMATISM AS A BASIS FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF LIFE

It has been stated on pp. 130 and 148 that Pragmatism is not a system of philosophy in the strict sense of the term. It is essentially a theory of knowledge. But as a theory of knowledge it has furnished material for new developments in the interpretation of life, and especially for a new form of religious philosophy, or 'Profession of Faith.'

The philosophy of Eucken, which has been analysed in § 45, is a religious philosophy, but it is not a direct development of 'the pragmatic movement,' and the most that can be said about its relation to that movement is that it 'has affinities with pragmatism, especially on the negative side.'

Since the twentieth century dawned, however, there have been a number of attempts to elaborate religious philosophy on pragmatic lines; the basis on which such religious philosophies rest, and out of which they are developed, is known as :

§ 64. THE DOCTRINE OF PLURALISM

The intention of the chapters in this part is to

explain 'Pluralism' and some of its aspects and issues.

Professor Ward, in his recent book, *The Realm of Ends*, which is likely to be the standard book on the subject for some years to come, sums up the present situation in reference to Pluralism as follows: 'The most striking characteristic of the nineteenth century so far as philosophical speculation is concerned, was . . . the predominance of what we may call Absolutism or Singularism [cf. Chap. IX] . . . In the lull which followed upon the collapse of these various forms of Absolutism, the rapid advance of scientific knowledge brought Naturalism (cf. Part I, Chap. III) for a time to the fore. But the insufficiency [of Naturalism] to bear the strain put upon it is at length becoming apparent; and so the necessity of interpreting nature in the terms of mind is again widely recognized. But the recoil from Absolutism still persists; and accordingly the twentieth century opens with the attempt to work out the idealistic interpretation, not in the old way as essentially a devolution of the One, but rather—as far as possible—to represent it as the evolution of the Many. In England, in America, in France, even in Germany—once the stronghold of Absolutism—systems of pluralism more or less pronounced are rife.'

But what is Pluralism? In this passage Dr. Ward indicates that it is *the doctrine that life is an evolution of the Many rather than a devolution*

of the One. But to say this and nothing more, is as good as to say nothing at all. We need to take hold on such a statement, and, as far as possible, unfold its significance.

§ 65. PLURALISM IS FOUNDED ON THE PRAGMATIC THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

It must be understood, in the first place, that the doctrine of Pluralism, whilst, as is shown in § 74, it is related to Leibnitzianism, depends upon the pragmatic theory of knowledge. We found in the last chapter that this theory of knowledge is limited to an examination of the knowledge possessed by human beings. It is not God's knowledge, or any other sort of knowledge, but just *human knowledge*, yours and mine, that can be examined and that counts for anything. It may be but a limited portion of reality that a human being can know, or that all human beings know, but what they do not know is wholly hypothetical, and it is waste of time to endeavour to speculate about it. As 'knowledge grows from more to more, men will know more of reality, but at any given time they are obliged to identify knowledge with what they know.

Having planted our feet firmly on this notion, we take a step further towards Pluralism by recalling that we only come to know *one thing at a time*, and that our knowledge grows by addition or accretion. It is bit by bit, by adding item to item, that

we accumulate knowledge. In other words we add 'concept' to 'concept' (see last chapter) until our knowledge is a 'bundle of concepts.'

§ 66. DISTINCT AND INDEPENDENT OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE

It follows, logically, that if we recognize our concepts as distinct we must recognize the objects of which they are the *representations* and *reconstructions* as distinct and independent, each one with characteristics of its own, and each individual with a distinctive behaviour. '*Behaviour* is a term appropriate only to what is individual or unique, and is not a mere instance of law and uniformity. No one would ordinarily speak of the behaviour of falling bodies ; for, in merely gravitating, bodies display no special character. But we might speak of a ship or a balloon as behaving well or ill ; such things have a certain individuality, and so receive a proper name. *Per contra* the term individuality always implies behaviour.' ¹

So, then, our world is full of objects which possess their natures independently. But this does not mean that they are unrelated. It means that the relation which any object bears to its environment does not define its nature. The external situation is the *occasion* for the manifestation of the activity of an object, but never acts as the sole determinant of its individuality.

¹ Ward, *The Realm of Ends*, p. 50.

In physical nature we recognize separate things, but Pluralism does not speak of things as *individuals*. It says that we know things such as mountains and rivers and trees and atoms as separate things; but, although these things have movement, they have no *behaviour* because they have no individuality. There is activity in things, there is interaction and uniformity amongst them, but of themselves, in and by themselves, they have no contingency, no uncertainty, no spontaneity, and it is only through the action of individuals upon them that their spontaneity and contingency, and the changes which they undergo, can be explained.

Therefore, the next step in an attempt to understand Pluralism is to seek for some explicit knowledge as to what an 'individual' as distinguished from a 'thing' means to a Pluralist, and what is the relationship of one individual to others, and to the whole.

§ 67. INDIVIDUALITY IN PLURALISM

In the first place, Pluralists assure us that the 'self' or individuality, of which each one of us is conscious, furnishes us with our standard of what we are to understand by an individuality; and self-analysis reveals the following general characteristics:—

(a) *Subjective spontaneity* and a power of initiative, or the power to act upon things so

as to produce order, regularity, and uncertainty among them. Another name for this characteristic is '*Causal Efficiency*,' which means that whilst with things *the occasion* inevitably determines the result, in individuals there is a capacity to change *according to an internal principle* which is in itself an efficient cause. There are no laws determining the activities of individuals who compose the world, unless we call their own nature a law, 'and then indeed the world would start with as many laws as there are individuals.'

(b) *An impulse towards self-realization.* The irreducible minimum essential to being in any sense an individual is 'behaviour directed towards self-conservation or self-realization.' An individual is often defined as something that cannot be divided without being destroyed, as for instance a clock. But such things are not true individuals or selves; a clock has no interest in, or impulse towards, its own conservation.

(c) *Plasticity*, or the capacity of forming fixed habits in response to the influence of environment. In other words the capacity not only of responding to *new* relations, but of submitting to *old* ones; not only of adopting and adapting new conditions, but of so yielding to old conditions that they form 'stepping-stones to higher things.' Looking back upon the

career and progress of an individual we may distinguish at any given point, on the one side, habits, tastes, and dexterities acquired, old possibilities foreclosed, and habits fixed in accordance with the general trend of things; and, on the other side, new decisions being taken, fresh experiments being made, happy thoughts occurring to the individual, with their usual sequel of trial and error and possible eventual success.¹

These three characteristics: *Subjective spontaneity*, or the power to produce new arrangements, an *Impulse towards self-realization*, or the power to develop, and *Plasticity*, or the power to yield to circumstances so as to be free for fresh activities, are the most general characteristics of an individual as distinguished from a thing.

§ 68. VARIETIES OF INDIVIDUALS

There is an infinite variety of individuals in the world. Below us there is an endless gradation of *lower forms*, and no one may say where the line is which separates individuals from things. Some individuals are *conceptual*, in the sense that we can form clear ideas of them, but evidence is not wanting that there are individuals much lower in the scale than the conceptual, and some Pluralists go so far as to say that 'matter is effete mind,' or

¹ This sentence is a condensation of pp. 74 and 75 in *The Realm of Ends*.

that from which individuality has vanished, but in which some form of spontaneity still remains.

There is also much evidence of the existence of individualities much higher in the scale than the conceptual, and the highest of all these individualities, of whose existence we have much evidence but no exact knowledge because we cannot form clear pictures of them, is GOD. The attempts on the part of certain philosophers and theologians to prove that life and individuality are confined to this planet, are so vitiated either by ignorance or special pleading, that Pluralists find themselves justified in rejecting their arguments. They say that if we regard this universe as teeming with living orbs, we cannot imagine these orbs as constituting a commonwealth of worlds, even if we are isolated. There can be no higher unity in the universe if individuality is restricted to this planet.

Therefore the Pluralist applies the principle of continuity upwards as well as downwards. To connect these otherwise isolated worlds he is driven to assume a hierarchy of intelligences of a higher order, and so is led on to conceive of a *Highest of All*.¹

¹ See *The Realm of Ends*, p. 443

CHAPTER XIII

PLURALISTIC THEOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY

§ 69. PLURALISM AND GOD

WE have seen that the Pluralist is driven to assume a hierarchy of intelligences of a higher order than man ; and that he is led on to conceive the existence of a Supreme Being.

Some Pluralists argue that this Supreme Being is only *Primus inter pares*, or one among many and *one of* the many, although He is the first ; they regard Him as being imperfect and dependent, like each one of the many, only less so.

Others argue that, whilst He is one among many, He is *not one of the many*. He is limited, but His limitation is an internal limitation. He has chosen to limit Himself by creating other individuals over against Himself. He is not an inconceivable abstraction that is only infinite and absolute because it is beyond everything and means nothing, but He is a living God in a universe that contains multitudes of free individuals. And the greater the freedom and

capacity of the individuals He has created, the more real must be the limitations of the Creator.

But it is a mistake to suppose that such limitation reduces His greatness or His majesty. 'It would be absurd to suppose that, in thus determining Himself, He, so to say, diminishes Himself. Such determination may be negation, nay, must be, to be real at all; but it is not abnegation.'¹ Pluralism does not treat God like Pantheism does; for the fundamental idea of Pantheism is, so to speak, that God differentiates, or '*breaks Himself up*' into the world. But in doing so He ceases to be God. He and the world become one. 'Such Theism is Atheism.' But if the world is the 'garment of God' but not God; if whilst He is immanent in it, He is also transcendent to it, 'the greater the capacity and freedom of the creatures that are in it, *the greater still is he who created* and sustains, and somehow overrules them all.'

§ 70. THE PLURALIST THEORY OF EVOLUTION

According to Pluralism the universe is filled with self-determining free agents 'severally intent on attaining more good, or at least on retaining the good they have got.' On this presupposition is based a theory of evolution which is essentially different from the theory of evolution hitherto held and expounded.

¹ *The Realm of Ends*, p. 443.

The earlier theory of evolution which *Darwin* did so much to establish, and to explain, by his epoch-making book, *The Origin of Species*, meant that the process, or *modus operandi*, of the creation of life consisted in the unfolding of an organism which was regarded as completely pre-existing in miniature. 'Each organism was thought to be an "educt" or unfolding of an embryo; the original germ was thought to have included the next generation and this the next—in short, all future generations—germ within germ, in ever smaller miniature after the fashion of an infinite juggler's box.'¹

When the theologians found that this theory of evolution was gaining more and more influence over the human mind, they adapted themselves to circumstances, adopted the Darwinian theory, and spoke of it as the gradual unfolding of a plan on the part of the Creator, who always works through secondary causes.

This 'Darwinian' theory still holds sway over a good many minds, but amongst philosophers it has been largely superseded by the Pluralist theory of '*epigenesis*,' which means that every new organism is not an 'educt' but a 'product.' Its parts are in no sense present in the embryo, but are gradually organized, one after another, in an order which has been determined in the course of the history of the species to which the organism

¹ Thompson and Geddes, *Evolution of Sex*, p. 78.

belongs, so that in its growth the individual retraces the main stages through which the species has advanced.

Moreover, each individual in the world is an *agent*, and if we put the theory of '*epigenesis*' in the language of the theologian, it means that God, the Creator, has chosen to create an infinite number of creators, and the Pluralist maintains that 'unless creators are created, nothing is really created, and the idea of creation could not enter our minds at all.'

Men are, therefore, in a real sense, workers together with God for the production of a perfect world, which is not yet but is to be; and the relation between each individual and every other, from the lowest to the highest, can be expressed in the two words *Continuity* and *Solidarity*, which imply 'conjointly liable' and 'mutually responsible,' and also include the conception that the higher depends on the lower, and the lower on the higher, the action of each reverting upon all, and of all upon each.

The creation is, therefore, a '*synthesis*.' That is to say, it is more than a mere sum of parts, just as 'water' is a *synthesis*, and not a mere sum of gases in certain proportions. Wherever we have an example of separate effects ceasing, and being succeeded by phenomena quite different, there we have an illustration of the Pluralist's theory of the whole universe. Each individual, and each

thing, is in some sense a factor of the whole; but because of its relation to the whole, each has qualities and properties which could not exist if the individuals and the things were in isolation.

§ 71. GOOD AND EVIL

This theory of evolution has a special effect on the perennial problem of 'Good and Evil.'

The Pluralist recognizes a serious problem of evil, but he says that there is no evil *principle* in the world. There is a principle of good, but there are not, and cannot be, two *co-ordinate* powers. There is a good moral order in the world, and there is disorder, but the disorder is not as radical as the order, and in the main, and in the long run, all things work together for good. Therefore there is a conservation of the good such as does not exist for evil. 'Truth wakes to perish never, but errors never harmonize, and tend to refute one another.'

But whilst for the Pluralist there is no evil principle, and no evil ONE in the world, there is much *actual* evil. And this evil is not the mere negative of good. It cannot be compared 'to the shadows in a picture or to the dissonances in a sonata, that only enhance the aesthetic perfection of the whole.' The evil in the world is *inherently* bad. The comfortable doctrines which teach that there is a soul of good in things evil; that

what is, in one sense, evil, in another sense is good; and that some things which seem evil produce good effects, are the outcome of loose thinking, or at least of a way of thinking which does not satisfy a Pluralist. What is evil *is* evil, physical suffering *is* evil, error *is* evil, sin *is* evil, and these evils can never be made good; the only rational course is to destroy them, or remove them from the world in some way or other.

But if there is no evil principle and no evil One in the world, how does the Pluralist account for the *actual* evil which he says is so real?

His answer begins at the point where we left off at the last section. He says that there are no grounds for assuming the existence of a God who does everything, or who is omnipotent in the sense that He can do anything anyhow. Many Pluralists refuse to use theological language because Theism transcends the upper limits of Pluralism, but those who do so, assume that God is the Creator who has created Creatures, and that these Creatures create in their turn. *By going against His will they cause evil.* Moreover, the world is not a 'ready-made world,' the universe is not a 'block universe'; and a perfect world, if ever one should come to be, will be the joint result of the efforts of the Creator and His Creatures.

Some Creatures become expert by experiment, and some of them fail altogether. 'Where the Many have some initiative—where development is

"epigenetic"—contingency and conflict, fallibility and peccability, seem inevitable.'

There are good things and evil things, good men and evil men, and tendencies towards good and evil in all men ; but the good is not necessarily related to the evil ; evil is not a necessary *offset* to good ; it does not derive its meaning from its relation to the good ; and the realization of the good is eternal and necessary.

To this end, the evil must be eliminated both from things and from men, and therefore 'there must be real losses and real losers.' Professor James condenses the teaching of Pluralism, so far as it concerns the moral conduct of men, into the following words: 'I find myself willing to take the universe to be really dangerous and adventurous. . . . Suppose the world's Author put the case to you before creation, saying: I am going to make a world not certain to be saved, a world the perfection of which shall be conditional merely, the condition being that each several agent does its own "level best." I offer you the chance of taking part in such a world. Its safety, you see, is unwarranted. It is a real adventure, with real danger, yet it may win through. It is a social scheme of co-operative work genuinely to be done. Will you join in the procession? Will you trust the other agents enough to face the risks? . . . There is a healthy-minded buoyancy in most of us which

such a universe would exactly fit. . . . It would be just like the world we practically live in. . . . Yet, perhaps, some would not : for there are morbid minds in every human collection, and to them the prospect of a universe with only a fighting chance of safety would probably make no appeal. . . . To men of this complexion religious monism comes with its consoling words : " All are one with God, and with God all is well." The everlasting arms are beneath, whether in the world of finite appearance you seem to fail or to succeed. There can be no doubt that when men are reduced to their last sick extremity, absolutism is the only saving scheme. Pluralistic moralism simply makes their teeth chatter, it refrigerates the very heart within their breast.' ¹

The sum and substance, therefore, of the teaching of Pluralism concerning 'good and evil' is that evil is not *necessarily* implied in the universe. It is in the world, but the world is not irremediably vitiated by it. *Good* is in a stronger position than evil, for it is both a principle and an ideal in the world.

But *the supremacy of the Good is not guaranteed*. It is made possible. It is the goal towards which all the individuals in the world ought to strive.

Pluralism 'has no saving message for incurably sick souls. It is no philosophy for the tender-

¹ *Pragmatism*, pp. 290 f.

minded; it makes life worth living only for those in whom the fighting spirit is alive.'

§ 72. PLURALISM AND SOCIETY

In addition to a new theory of evolution and a doctrine concerning 'good and evil,' Pluralism also suggests a theory concerning the nature of Society and its possible destination.

It has been said that each of the ages behind us has been characterized by an idea which has been more or less germinal to the thinking of each age, and that the idea which is germinal to our age is the idea of 'Society.' The nature of 'Society' is being widely discussed, and the central point round which most of the discussion gathers is the question whether 'Society' is an organism, or whether it is merely a congregation of individuals.

Many analogies between Society and an organism have been recognized and made use of by the teachers of morals and religion, but the inquiry is more fundamental than one of analogy. According to Dr. Ward, we are brought up against the question whether Society is the result of the co-operation of separate and individual men, or whether there be a 'higher order,' an 'objective spirit,' with a consciousness and a will superior to the consciousness and will of any individual in Society, and also superior to any mere sum of the consciousness and wills of all the individuals in Society.

In other words: 'Is "Society" a real unity, is there, in an exact sense, a social spirit, a social will, a social end, a social conscience?'

§ 73. NOMINALISTS AND REALISTS

Two radically different answers have been given to this question, and both are held by Sociologists to-day. They are known as 'Nominalism and Realism.'¹

The difference between the two answers is indicated by the names given to them when those names are traced to their historic source.

(a) *The History of the Terms*

The terms come to us from the Middle Ages, and are the names given to the doctrines of the philosophers who argued about the question whether 'general notions' represent realities or are merely names for convenient but empty abstractions of the human mind without any corresponding realities.

On the one hand the *Nominalists* held that all 'general notions,' such as 'book,' 'man,' 'horse,' 'society,' &c., are mere names, which are convenient, but stand for no realities. They called them 'general terms.' They also held that abstract terms such as 'truth,' 'justice,' 'honesty,' 'liberty,' &c., were of the same kind, and without any corresponding realities attached to them.

¹ See *The Realm of Ends*, p. 118.

On the other hand, the *Realists* insisted that some real substance exists, corresponding to every 'general notion,' and combining its constituent properties; that, for example, there exists something *real* corresponding to the general conception of 'table,' which is no table in particular, but in which every particular table participates, which consists, as it were, of the essence of all tables, and is the only real table in existence. They also argued that there is something *real* corresponding to the general notions, 'truth,' 'justice,' 'honesty,' 'liberty,' &c.

(b) *Nominalist Sociology*

So in our day there are sociologists who are *Nominalist* because they argue that 'Society' is nothing more than a convenient name for a collection of individuals, held together by the private interests that association promotes, and which the 'social contract' was formed to secure.

Their view has its roots partly in the philosophy of *Rousseau*, the philosopher of the French Revolution, who taught that all men are by nature free and independent individuals, each having his own ends and aims; but that when a number of these individuals, who have ends and aims in common, mutually agree to surrender part of their freedom for the advantages of government, then a 'society' is formed. But the main source of this theory in English philosophy is to be found in Part II. of the

Leviathan, by *Thomas Hobbes* (1588–1679), in which he treats of ‘Commonwealth.’ He taught that the ‘Laws of Nature,’ such as ‘justice,’ ‘equity,’ ‘modesty,’ ‘mercy,’ and, in sum, doing to others as we would be done to, are contrary to men’s natural passions, which lead them to love freedom from restraint, and to exercise dominion over others. Hence, if there be no visible power to force men through fear of punishment to the observation of the ‘laws of nature’ aforesaid, they will be in a state of continuous strife.

But how is such a power to be erected? Not merely by a small number, or a multitude, of men covenanting together for mutual defence and protection, for if we could suppose a multitude to consent to the observation of ‘the laws of nature,’ without a common power to keep them in awe, there need be no civil government or commonwealth at all, because there would be peace without subjection. But men will not so consent, and the only way in which to erect a power that shall force them to do so, is for every man virtually to say to every other man ‘I authorize and give up my right of governing myself to one man or to an assembly of men, on this condition, that thou also give up thy right to him or to them, and authorize all his, or their, actions in like manner.’

Hobbes argued that ‘Society’ is something more than a mere collection of individuals, in the sense in which a herd of deer, or a hive of bees, or a

nest of ants is a collection of individuals, for the deer, bees, and ants have no means whereby they can signify to one another what each thinks expedient for the common benefit, and there is no mutual agreement. But whilst Society is more than a mere collection because it involves mutual surrender of rights, there is no superior consciousness or will in it, as there appears to be in a hive of bees, or a nest of ants, or a herd of cattle—which acts for the good of each and all in the herd or nest or hive, without any conscious consent on the part of individuals.

Present-day Nominalist writers on Society have adopted Hobbes' argument, and they say that Society is a congregation of men depending for its being on the mutual surrender of rights, but that it is less an organism than a herd of cattle, a hive of bees, or a nest of ants, since each man is so eager for his own selfish interests, and surrenders as little as possible for the good of all, and that, therefore, law is necessary to restrain selfishness.

(c) *Realist Sociology*

On the other hand, the Pluralists who write about Society from the *Realist* point of view, maintain that there is an 'Objective Spirit' in Society, a social spirit, a social will, a social end, a social conscience. 'Whereas for the Nominalist extreme, Society is the accident, and the isolated

individuals the substance, for the Realist the relation is completely transposed.' Society is the reality and the individuals are but the accidents. 'As this is sometimes expressed nowadays: Society is a reality, but an *over-individual reality* . . . the so-called individual is one being out of Society and quite another being in it. A hand severed from the living body is a hand no more . . . and no combination of severed members will make a living whole. This is the truth that the whole eighteenth century failed to grasp, and that the nineteenth has taught us to appreciate.'¹ The individuals imagined by Hobbes, and the Nominalists generally, are *already social products* in the sense that they are self-conscious and rational human beings. They are what they are, only because *Society preceded them*, 'and to ask which was first—a human being *as we know him*, or Society, is like asking the trivial question, which was first, the hen or the egg?'

'Yet somehow the transition from man in a *free independent state of nature* to man in society has taken place,'² and, according to the theory of the Pluralist, 'Society' has gradually grown up in the same way as the world is being made: by the interaction of free persons with each other, and with the 'informing Spirit immanent in the

¹ *The Realm of Ends*, pp. 118–120.

² This is a summary of arguments and statements in *The Realm of Ends*, by Ward.

whole.' The free spirits of men and the higher common Spirit are mutually complementary.

The Pluralist concludes, therefore, that Society is truly a living reality, though a complex and *over-individual* one. There is in Society 'an objective mind that is at once immanent in and dominant over its several members.' The several members attain to self-consciousness, and think and act rationally, because they are related to this immanent and dominant spirit. It is by this interaction of the several individual spirits, and the informing Spirit of the whole, that progress is possible; and whilst the Pluralist does not attempt to forecast the future development of Society, because *uncertainty* is one of the most important factors that he sees in the process of evolution, he believes in a universal tendency towards perfection as the very principle of life. He believes that Society is advancing towards a *higher unity*; and though the movement is retrograde sometimes, like a path which hath bends in it, the advance movement will prevail finally, and the end of a higher unity will be reached.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DIFFICULTIES OF PLURALISM

PLURALISM has been spoken of as *the doctrine of Monadism*. Its critics have insisted that as an interpretation of life it is full of '*Leibnitzian assumptions*.' Therefore, a brief description of the Leibnizian doctrine of Monads will form our best introduction to the difficulties which are urged against the philosophy of Pluralism.

§ 74. LEIBNITZIAN MONADOLOGY

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz (1646-1716) is an interesting figure in the history of philosophy. There have been competent judges who have regarded him as a greater scholar than Aristotle. He drew up a summary of his philosophical writings for Prince Eugène of Saxony in 1714 which was published, after his death, under the title of *Monadology*.

He was the first Pluralist of modern times, for instead of finding the ultimate fact of the universe in a single substance, he found it in an infinite

number of substances, unities, forces, individuals. He accepted the statement of *Epicurus* (321–270 B.C.) that the universe is composed of ‘atoms,’ and that each atom possesses a power of self-movement something like the power of free-will in man; but his idea of the ‘atoms’ differed from that of Epicurus, inasmuch as he considered that they possessed not only the power of self-movement, but also an internal principle of change, and were capable of being influenced by anything outside themselves. Moreover, Epicurus had thought of the ‘atoms’ as *material*, but for Leibnitz they were immaterial and indivisible units of force. These simple, indivisible entities, destitute of parts and extension, he called *monads*. Each monad was a ‘sort of soul existing always in a sort of organized body,’ and each an individual differing from every other. These monads, said he, vitalize all matter, but with varying degrees of intensity. *God is the Supreme Monad*, the most active and vital of all. Rational souls are monads in *the image of God*. They are capable of self-development, and of fellowship with each other and with the Supreme Monad. Sub-rational monads are the *instruments* of God and men; whilst rational monads are creative *agents* working together with God.

Such is a *résumé* of the Leibnitzian *doctrine of Monads*, and all Pluralists accept its main assumptions, because they seem to them to be suggested

directly by the facts of the world, and to be warranted by the Pragmatic theory of knowledge.

For example, according to the Leibnitzian view, all the individuals there are have existed from the first, and will continue to exist indefinitely; moreover, all the individual souls do not get bodies, but always have them, and the Pluralist 'seems shut up to some modification of Leibnitz's doctrine that all souls have pre-existed always in a sort of organized body which at the time of generation undergoes a certain transformation and augmentation.'¹

Once more, according to the Leibnitzian view, the goal of all the progress in nature is the final harmony and unification of all the individuals in the universe, and the elimination of all evil, even physical evil. The Pluralist also asserts the possibility of such a consummation. To the Pluralist the whole world is 'a realm of ends.'

§ 75. PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOPHYSICAL DIFFICULTIES

Professor Ward points out that there are both *physical and psychophysical difficulties* opposed to these assumptions. He also mentions certain *metaphysical* difficulties which are so technical that they may be neglected by the ordinary student. But the other difficulties are self-evident.

There is, for instance, the fact that all scientific

¹ *The Realm of Ends*, p. 205.

men hold the opinion that 'the law of the dissipation of energy points conclusively to universal death as the final goal of all.' There are also *physical catastrophes* which at any time may involve the clash of worlds and the destruction of this one. And 'if we smile at Fourier when he imagined that, so soon as we have learnt to dwell in brotherly love together, the whales will seize our ships by their cables and tow them to their destinations over seas no longer briny but pleasant to drink, must we not regard it as still more extravagant to picture finite minds taming the earthquake and the tornado, to say nothing of checking the stars in their courses and staying the clash of worlds'? There are also the obvious facts of *birth* and *death*, which look like a beginning and an ending to individual lives.

These difficulties are very grave, and all that the Pluralist can safely do in the face of them is to maintain that *theoretically* birth and death may not really be what they seem—that for example, birth may be a process of 'budding,' whereby an organism produces a new whole. 'Even sexual reproduction . . . seems to be essentially nothing more than the union of two buds'; that death may be 'the covered way of life,' and that 'Physical set-backs, sometimes involving whole worlds . . . are the exception, not the rule. It may be that with time they will become rarer still.' But according to Professor Ward, '*Theism* promises

to effect much in resolving the difficulties of Pluralism,' and a union of the philosophy of Pluralism with the doctrines of Christianity results in a view of the world which is *rational* and *practical* and *hopeful*.

PART VI
THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE
OVERMAN

CHAPTER XV

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE OVERMAN

ON p. 415 of *The Realm of Ends* a brief reference is made to 'a strange prophet whose writings are at this moment exciting the keenest attention.' The 'strange prophet' is Nietzsche, whose brilliant writings, which began in 1872 and ended by a pitiful collapse of physical and mental health in 1889, have attracted the attention, if not always the approval, of those who work and fight under the banners of advanced thought.

An account of *The Life and Works of Nietzsche* is ready to hand for any man who cares to read it in Anthony M. Ludovici's little book, published by Constable & Co. It is not my purpose to write a biography of Nietzsche. Neither is it my intention to review in detail the vast collection of ideas which are massed together in his writings, but rather to describe their general drift, spirit, and influence.

§ 76. NIETZSCHE AND HIS STYLE

It has often been complained that there is no continuity either about Nietzsche's style or his

thoughts. For example, a writer in the *Spectator* said at the time his works were first issued in an English translation: 'A more execrable style it would be difficult to invent or to imagine. . . . The writer jumps from theme to theme, his sentences are broken up by parentheses, asides, references to some other subject which appears to have crossed his mind at the moment. He cannot keep straight for half a page. We speak of these writings as constituting a philosophy, that is to say, a body of doctrine, and in a sense this is so. But so far as form and method are concerned, they do not constitute a philosophy, but are a series of chaotic and often quite incoherent jottings noted down by a man whose feelings altogether outrun his capacity for thinking.'

This is a severe criticism, and it is certainly a prejudiced estimate of Nietzsche's capacity for thinking. The writer of the article appears to have thought that Nietzsche's writings were not to be taken seriously. But in spite of his opinion they have seriously influenced the thought of the twentieth century, and that influence seems to be spreading like an epidemic in the literature of English drama and fiction, so that no book which makes any pretence to deal in any way with contemporary thought can neglect them.

Nietzsche's writings might be roughly divided into Denunciations and Dogmas.

§ 77. NIETZSCHE'S DENUNCIATIONS

The denunciations which Nietzsche uttered were directed against the insincerity and ineffectiveness of the spirit which was characteristic of the end of the nineteenth century. At that time 'Europe was suffering from the worst kind of spiritual illness—weakness of will. Everywhere comfort and freedom from danger were becoming the highest ideals; everywhere, too, virtue was being confounded with those qualities which led to the highest possible amount of security, and tame back-parlour pleasures; and man was gradually developing into a harmless domesticated type of animal, capable of performing a host of charming little drawing-room tricks which rejoiced the hearts of his womenfolk.

'Sleep seemed to be the greatest accomplishment. It had become all-important to have a good night's rest, and everything was done to achieve this end. A man no longer asked his heart what it dictated, when he stood irresolute before a daring deed, he simply consulted Morpheus, who warned him that he could not promise him a soft pillow if he did anything that was ever so slightly naughty. In the end Morpheus would prevail, and thus all Europe was beginning to snore peacefully the whole night through, with marvellous regularity, while manliness rotted and danger dwindled.' ¹

¹ *Ludovici*, p. 59 f.

Against this state of affairs Nietzsche protested. He considered that European civilization was led astray from two sides. On the one hand, it was misled by a low-toned, commonplace Utilitarianism whose watchwords were mass-Happiness, comfort, and conservation of general and individual welfare. His opinion was that, for this reason, vulgarity was the key-note of science and ethics, of enlightenment and virtue; and success, not fitness, was the aim of life.

On the other hand, it was misdirected by ascetic and altruistic ideals. Regard for *future* happiness, and regard for the happiness *of others*, Nietzsche considered to be unhealthy, and, in his opinion, these ideals found their typical expression in Christianity. Christianity, he said, had destroyed the Roman empire and threatened to destroy European civilization, because it disparaged natural impulses, and instead of preaching manliness, courage, and war, it advocated self-sacrifice and compassion, and favoured the multiplication of the least desirable upon earth, thus tending to produce nihilism, decadence, degeneration, and death.

Such were his opinions, and he expressed them in a way which commanded attention. 'I pass through this people,' he said, 'and keep my eyes open; they have become *smaller*, and ever become *smaller*: the reason thereof is their doctrine of happiness and virtue.

'For they are moderate also to virtue—because

they want comfort. With comfort, however, moderate virtue is also compatible.

‘Of man there is little here; therefore do their women make themselves manly. For only he who is man enough will *save the womanly* in the woman.

‘In their hearts they want simply one thing most of all: *that no one hurt them.*

‘That, however, is cowardice, though it be called virtue.’¹

Of preachers and teachers of Christianity generally, he said, ‘They are wretched, no doubt, all these mumblers and underground forgers, though warmly seated together. But they tell us their wretchedness is a selection and distinction from God, that the dogs which are loved most are most whipped, that their misery may also be a preparation, a trial, a schooling; perhaps even more—something which at some time to come will be requited and paid back with immense interest in gold. No, in happiness. This they call *blessedness.*’

‘Enough, enough; bad air, bad air. Methinks this workshop of virtue positively reeks.’²

The title of the book from which the last quotation is taken, *Beyond Good and Evil*, suggests the starting-point of Nietzsche’s denunciations. He was originally and professionally a student

¹ *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, p. 52.

² *Beyond Good and Evil*. Aphorism 14.

and teacher of the Science of Language. His interest lay in tracing the growth of ideas in literature, and in examining the documents relating to ancient history. He was powerfully attracted by the ideas behind the constantly recurring words 'good' and 'evil.' He says that as a boy of thirteen the problem of the origin of evil haunted him, and he wrote his first attempt at a philosophical composition on this subject; and that his historical and philological reading, together with an inborn sense regarding psychological questions, changed his problem in a very short time into that other one—Under what circumstances and conditions did man invent the valuations, good and evil? And what is their own specific value?

§ 78. NIETZSCHE'S DOGMAS

Nietzsche's first literary productions were essays on the poems of Theognis, a Greek poet who flourished about 450 B.C., whose poems were intended as precepts for the conduct of human life. Nietzsche found that in them the terms 'good' and 'bad' were used to designate the oligarchy and the democracy, the term 'good' being an epithet applied to the 'oligarchy' and the term 'bad' an epithet applied to the 'democracy.' By this arbitrary use of the terms, he was induced to look upon morality merely as a weapon in the struggle for power; and recalling the well-

known fact that what one set of men will call 'good,' is called 'bad' by another set of men, he came to the conclusion that 'whenever and wherever good and evil have been set up as absolute values, they have been thus elevated to power with the view of preserving and multiplying one specific type of man. All moralities, therefore, are but so many Trades Union banners flying above the heads of different classes of men, woven and upheld by them for their own needs and aspirations.' ¹

Hence arose in his mind the twofold question: Is that which we have for centuries held for good and evil, really good and evil? and does the moral code of modern society favour the multiplication of a desirable type of manhood? To both of those questions he appended an emphatic No. He identified the moral code of Europe with Christianity, and considered that Christian morals were mere devices and tricks on the part of a weak and inefficient manhood to escape ruin. He said that Christianity was the mother of Democracy and Socialism, because both Democracy and Socialism seemed to him to be but the reflection in politics of the Christian teaching that all are the children of one Father, and that all men are alike before God. He considered that Democracy was on the wrong track in trying to find rulers by 'rummaging and fumbling amongst the multitude,' and by treating all men as if they

¹ *Ludovici*, p. 32.

were of the same value. For, said he, some men are like noble plants, and they are few; other men are like weeds, and they are very many; and if the foundation principle of Democracy—that the majority must rule—is to be the law of human society, then the noblest men, being in a minority, must suffer and die out, and human society gradually degenerate. For such reasons he spoke of Christian morality as ‘slave morality,’ and declared that both Christian morals and Democratic principles were attempts on the part of the low, the base, the weak, and the worthless among mankind, ‘*the slaves*,’ to establish themselves as the most powerful on earth. This tendency, he said, must be checked at all costs; and with a terrible earnestness he called upon the men of Europe to ‘Transvalue their values.’ He defined ‘Good’ as all that increases the feeling of power, and the will to power, in man; ‘Bad’ as all that proceeds from weakness; and ‘Happiness’ as the feeling which comes when power increases, and resistance is overcome. ‘He bade men seek not contentedness, but more power; not peace at any price, but warfare; not virtue, but capacity.’

§ 79. NIETZSCHE, AN AMORALIST

For such reasons as have just been stated Nietzsche has been called an ‘*Amoralist*’ or ‘*Non-moralist*,’ and in a sense, this is true of him.

But it is a grave mistake to make scandalous remarks about his work, to throw mud at his personal character, or to sneer at the awful affliction which came upon him ere he died, for at the least he was always honest, and always thorough. He was perverse and unrestrained in language, and some of his opinions were obviously extravagant ; but to his credit it abides that he did much, and is doing much, by his works, to waken sleepers, and to give thinkers, social reformers, and Christian teachers, a very wholesome stimulus.

§ 80. NIETZSCHE'S GREAT WORK

Nietzsche's final philosophical views are enunciated in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, which is acknowledged to be the greatest of his creations, and to contain all his thoughts in a poetical form. It consists of a series of chapters, composed in figurative and fantastic prose, intended to imitate the style of an Oriental sacred book. In a sense it is an autobiography in four parts, the first three being published in 1886, and the fourth in 1892, three years after the collapse of his health.

Zarathustra stands for *Nietzsche*, and when the scene opens he is supposed to have spent from his thirtieth to his fortieth year in the search for truth, making his home in a mountain cavern with an eagle and serpent as his companions. At

length he has found a new gospel, the gospel of a new humanity, and resolves to leave his hermitage and offer it to men. The multitude, however, shows no taste for his revelations, and prefers the marvels of charlatans. Zarathustra accordingly turns from the masses and determines to *sing* his gospel in the form of an allegory, which shall be understood only by a few fellow workers who are in sympathy with him, and who will destroy the old conceptions of 'good' and evil,' write new values on new tables, and create new ideals for individual men and for society. His chants are contained in eighty chapters, which are by no means continuous and systematic. They are 'the outpouring of varying moods of gloom and gladness, hope and disgust; often wild and fiery in tone, with many traces of the struggle with self, and with old associations, but often also gracious with quaint charms, and touches of tenderness.'

The essence of this new gospel is that, as the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest have brought man to the highest place among animals, so, in time, there shall be realized on earth a more than human race. Humanity as it exists at present is a muddy stream, which is unclean, but which is useful because it leads to the ocean of 'overman,' which is clean and wholesome.

'Verily, a muddy stream is man. One must be at least a sea to be able to absorb a muddy stream

without becoming unclean. Behold, I teach you Superman, he is the sea; in him your great contempt can sink.' ¹

Man, as he is, is 'the rope between the animal and the superman,' and 'what is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal.' Man is not made, but in the making, and his being is to be completed by effort, by suffering, and sacrifice.

But the suffering and sacrifice necessary are very different in form from the suffering and sacrifice which are commonly thought of by Christians. The 'superman' is to be a race of select egoists built on an heroic scale, whose heroism shall not consist in the restraint of their strength for the sake of those who are weaker, but in the exertion of their strength for the destruction of all who are weak and unfit, according to the new standard of physiology. Supermen are to be the preachers of death to all the weak and the feeble. Their chief characteristic is to be 'will to power.' 'Wherever,' says he, 'I found living matter, I found will to power, and even in the servant I found the yearning to be master. Only where there is life there is will, though not will to live, but thus I teach thee—WILL to POWER.'

In the days of the superman, society shall not be an obstacle to the self-assertion of the individual, but, 'as it were, a fostering garden where they may grow grace and strength, and for which deity shall

¹ *Zarathustra*, p. 6.

be the inspiring faith in perfectibility, not a fixed power impending as a menace and a check upon the path of progress.'

The duty of man to-day is to prepare the way for the advent of this conquering race of supermen, to build the foundations of the kingdom of the overman, in which kingdom might will be right, and the overman will exploit and destroy all feeblermen, in the same way as, at the present time, men subjugate and destroy the lower animals. In short, a race is to appear that is to try the experiment of life wholly without faith in God, or in a world to come, or in the duty of common brotherhood.

'Oh, my brothers, where lies the greatest danger for all men's future? Is it not with the good and the just?'

'For they are those who say and feel in their heart, 'We know already what is good and just, we have it too. Woe to those who still seek after it. . . .''

'Break, break in pieces the good and the just. . . . The sea is in storm. Everything is in the sea. Up! up! ye old seamen's hearts. *Fatherland* ye say, say ye? *Our* helm is set thitherwards where is our *children's* land. Thither, stormier than the sea, storms our great longing.'¹

Thus does Zarathustra (or Nietzsche) call on living men to live for the future, to endeavour to

¹ *Zarathustra*, pp. 136-7.

create and to serve a posterity which shall be nobler than the present generations, but only nobler in the sense that they shall know no consideration or compassion, be bound by no moral principle, but live their own lives without regard for others. He bids living men prepare for such a race by throwing away the old tables of morality, and by bursting away from old restraints by an effort of vigorous will. Each man is bound by a hampering and irremovable sum of antecedents called 'the past,' he is a mere incident and single fragment in the stream of time; but if he boldly accepts and asserts his identity, or that self which is at the roots of his being, to that extent he will be a free spirit, and be a pioneer on the way to the world of supermen.

Such is an outline of Nietzsche's theory. It represents a cult which has been growing vigorously in England under the leadership of *G. Bernard Shaw*, and others, who teach a doctrine of the Superman, and a theory of social salvation by selective breeding and selective education.

§ 81. A PASSING PHASE OF THOUGHT

Many competent philosophers, however, are of opinion that, despite the rapidity with which the whole philosophy of the Overman is spreading, it is a cult which will not last long or in the end do any harm. *Professor A. K. Rogers* has pointed out that, in spite of its show of scientific temper,

the entire doctrine of the Overman reveals at the bottom the vicious fault of quarrelling with reality, and despairing of any result unless it can be provided with a new race of men to work upon; it represents the childish demand for a ready-made and finished product, created outright by a piece of machinery. Furthermore it suggests an attitude towards existing men which is not only contemptuous but slanderous. 'Beware,' says the Devil, in Mr. G. B. Shaw's *Man and Superman*, 'of the pursuit of the Superman; it leads to an indiscriminate contempt for the human. To a man, horses, dogs, and cats are mere species outside the moral world. Well, to the superman, men and women are species too, also outside the moral world.' If existing men be so generally worthless and incapable of improvement as Nietzsche and Shaw take for granted, there is little hope either for a race of supermen or any other sort of men.

Moreover, as Rogers indicates, the worth of human kind does not belong to men simply as individuals, or to their individual achievements, but to 'men co-operating in a worthy task, and thereby getting not simply the work done, but all the emotional realization that comes from its personal embodiment and content—this would allow for the significance of the human,' and this only is true democracy.

True Christianity, as distinct from the ecclesi-

astical Christianity upon which Nietzsche poured all the vials of his wrath, has a doctrine of The Overman, and a theory of a New Heaven and a New Earth. It assures us that 'Brotherhood is the end of all the ways of God'; and it calls on all men to help prepare for that end, not by self-assertion, but by 'dying to live.' 'The world is God's self-limitation, self-renunciation, might we venture to say? And so God is love. And what must that world be that is worthy of such love? The only worthy object of love is just love: it must, then, be a world that can love God. But love is free: in a ready-made world, then, it could have no place. Only as we learn to know God do we learn to love Him: hence the long and painful discipline of evolution, with its dying to live—the converse process to incarnation—the putting off the earthly for the likeness of God. In such a realm of ends we trust "that God is love indeed, and love creation's final law." We cannot live or move without faith, that is clear. Is it not, then, rational to believe in the best, we ask; and can there be a better?'¹

¹ *The Realm of Ends*, p. 453.

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